

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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What is the basis for solidarity?



by B. Ann Lastelle

One union in Illinois, Allied Industrial Workers Local 837, its members locked out by A.E. Staley Manufacturing since June, has worked hard to develop something relatively rare these days: labor solidarity. It spearheaded a coalition including striking miners, United Auto Workers (UAW) members working without a contract at Caterpillar, locked-out utility workers and municipal employees struggling to negotiate their first contract.

Local 837 members have traveled throughout the Midwest to speak to unions and other organizations, raise funds and form support groups. They have gone door to door in their own community, Decatur. A particularly close relationship has developed between Local 837 and Caterpillar workers in Decatur, who have donated thousands of dollars at monthly plant gate collections.

WHY STRUGGLES ISOLATED?

Why, despite these efforts to connect struggles, do workers remain so isolated from each other? A striking miner speaking at an October labor rally in Chicago said, "We sometimes look around and wonder, 'Are we in this alone?'" During the three-day Caterpillar strike in November, a strike headquarters near Peoria, Ill., was plastered with "UAW members only" stickers. Workers on the picket line had "never heard" of the labor solidarity rally the weekend before in Decatur, only 75 miles away. Not only scabs, but truck drivers and railroad workers, cross the picket lines at Staley.

There is much talk in the Chicago-area Staley Workers Solidarity Committee of building a "resurgent labor movement." How can we?—especially since the percentage of unionized workers has fallen to levels not seen since before the CIO, and inner city Blacks and Latinos are virtually excluded from production. The Staley workers, miners and Cat workers are certainly militant

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Black World

Lenin and the Black dimension



by Lou Turner

On the eve of Black History Month, the 70th anniversary of the death of Vladimir Lenin this January provides a fresh opportunity to recover from the rubble of collapsed "Communism" that part of his legacy that intersects the revolutionary Black dimension.

Lenin's theoretical legacy intersects the Black dimension at two significant points. The first is on the national question, particularly as it was spelled out in his time as the "Negro question," meaning Black masses in motion. Radical Black thought as it was articulated by such leaders and intellectuals as Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. DuBois, Claude McKay, and a little-known founder of African-American Marxism, Lovett Fort-Whiteman, constitutes the second coordinate.

In the same year, 1915, that he compiled his voluminous "Notebooks on Imperialism," meticulously identifying the many and disparate national movements in the Third World, from Persia and Mexico to the fraternity between the Movement of Young Egypt and the Irish nationalist movement, to the Nama-Herero wars against German imperialism in Namibia, Lenin also wrote an extensive study on "New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture" in America. Lenin, in the latter study, observed that far from the semi-feudal character of labor relations in southern agriculture constituting the sole determinant of the post-Reconstruction period, the fact that Blacks owned 14.5 % of the farms in the U.S., according to the 1910 census, revealed to what extent "The Negro urge to emancipation from the 'plantation owners' half a century after the 'victory' over the slave-owners is still marked by an exceptional intensity."¹

The year 1915 was also the year that DuBois wrote his incisive essay on the African roots of World War I. Only a year earlier, several weeks after the outbreak of World War I, Marcus Garvey and Amy Ashwood Garvey had founded the UNIA (Universal Negro Improvement Asso-

1. Lenin, Collected Works 22, p. 92.

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Decaying state of the nation

by Olga Domanski

The one-worldedness of the abysmal economic and social crises plaguing us, as 1994 begins, was brought into sharp focus by the way Bill Clinton wound up his first year in power—taking a trip to Europe during which he could not for one minute take his eyes off his problems at home. On his very first day home from his European trip, Clinton took the occasion of the Jan. 17 celebration of Martin Luther King's birthday to claim, in a speech at Howard University, that Dr. King would have supported what he accomplished in Europe for "peace, democracy and freedom." Nothing could be further from the truth.

EIGHT DAYS THAT DID NOT SHAKE THE WORLD

The eight-day trip to Brussels, Prague, Moscow, Minsk and Geneva had been designed to cast Clinton as a statesman and the U.S. as some sort of stabilizing force for a Europe in deep economic, political and social crisis. It was planned long before the Dec. 12 Russian elections, in which the virulent anti-Semitic and neo-fascist, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, won no less than 25% of the vote, exposing both how deep that crisis has grown and what it reflects of the dangers of a new kind of fascism arising in the world today.

In the face of that, whether or not the trip could be cast as a success in terms of furthering "peace, democracy and freedom" can hardly be measured in terms of the personality ratings his charm and performances at events such as the televised "town meeting" in Russia achieved, but has to begin with what the first of the trip's "summits," the meeting with 16 other heads of state who are members of NATO, revealed.

Whether it was offering the worried East European countries anxious to join NATO only "Partnerships for Peace" (and then selling it to them in Prague like a car salesman)—or whether it was making only one more totally empty "threat" of force against a Serbia driving to exterminate Bosnia—the total ambivalence that permeated every question taken up underlined what the outright genocide permitted in Bosnia had already exposed: that NATO, like all the political structures that defined the post-World War II world, is no more than a "carcass of dead policies."

* For an analysis of the economic, political and ideological crisis confronting the world since the collapse of Communism, see our Draft Perspectives Thesis for 1993-94, in the August-September 1993 issue of N&L.



Phoenix march on Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

As for the success of the demilitarization reached at the Moscow "summit," Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk's agreement to de-nuclearize the Ukrainian arsenal was immediately and loudly opposed by a large section of the Ukrainian parliament, which is needed for ratification; while even Clinton acknowledged that it would take only 15 seconds to reposition the missiles he and Boris Yeltsin agreed to stop pointing at each other.

It is the crisis within Russia itself, since the collapse of what called itself Communism, for which Clinton had absolutely nothing to offer. Even in the aftermath of Zhirinovskiy's shocking electoral victory, there had been

See "Where is Russia going?" page 5

only a momentary reversal in the West's demand that no financial help would be forthcoming until even more painful economic reforms were instituted.

HOW ARE WE DOING AT HOME?

The truth is, however, that from the beginning, despite the need Clinton felt to demonstrate his world "statesmanship," it was the state of his own nation right at home that was uppermost in his mind, as his first year in office was coming to an end. As he put it in his Howard University address to a predominantly Black audience: "As I come home on this Martin Luther King Day from a trip that fought for democracy and economic progress and security, I have to ask myself, 'How are we

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Chiapas insurrection opens 1994

Women in the revolt

Mexico City—On Jan. 1 women in Mexico were surprised by news of the revolt of indigenous women in Chiapas. According to the Zapatista National Liberation Army, the time has come to say enough to 500 years of exploitation and some 70 years of repressive government control and neoliberal exploitative economic policies.

Eyewitnesses to the capture of San Cristobal confirm there were about 1,500 Zapatistas, about a third of them women. There are women leaders, and women ages 15-20 have died.

In Chiapas, the vast wealth of natural resources contrasts to the great poverty of most of its people. Among 590,000 dwellings, one third have only one room where five or more people live. Three out of five households cook with wood or coal.

On the other hand, PEMEX [the state-owned petroleum industry] siphons off 92,000 barrels of crude oil each day from Chiapas, and extracts 516 million cubic feet of

More on Chiapas on page 9

natural gas each year. One fifth of the nation's petroleum production is taken out of this state.

Almost 60% of school age children do not attend school. Illiteracy in Chiapas is high. The causes of death, especially in the indigenous communities, are from curable diseases which killed 15,000 people in 1992.

Chiapas is basically an agricultural state which lags way behind on the social scale due to extreme widespread poverty and racial discrimination. In this setting, women undertake their traditional domestic roles in primitive conditions which cause them to have to work 16-18 hours a day carrying water and gathering firewood, grinding corn, caring for animals; venturing out to sell small amounts of produce, making long trips to find something to eat and on many occasions, helping their men during harvest. Their cultural traditions still involve arranged marriages, educating girls to obey and serve. Illiteracy among women is twice that of men, and very young girls help their mothers take care of their

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Zapatista rebels in Chiapas, Mexico.

We are a product of 500 years of struggle: first against slavery, then during the War of Independence against Spain led by insurgents, then to avoid being absorbed by North American imperialism, then to promulgate our constitution and expel the French empire from our soil, and later the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz denied us the just application of the Reform laws and the people rebelled and leaders like Villa and Zapata emerged, poor men just like us.

We have been denied the most elemental preparation so they can use us as cannon fodder and pillage the wealth of our country. They don't care that we have nothing, absolutely nothing, not even a roof over our heads, no land, no work, no health care, no food nor education. Nor are we able to freely and democratically elect our political representatives, nor is there independence from foreigners, nor is there peace or justice for ourselves and our children.

But today, we say ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. We are the inheritors of the true builders of our nation.

From the Declaration of the Zapatista National Liberation Army

Black women's conference draws 2000

by Diane Lee

Over 2,000 Black women scholars and activists attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology conference called "Black Women in the Academy: Defending Our Name, 1894-1994," in Cambridge, Jan. 13-15. The idea for the title came from the events at the Columbian World Exposition in Chicago in 1893, where Black men and women were denied full representation. However, as Robin Kilson, one of the organizers, said, the idea for the conference was born in the kitchen of Black feminist theorist Nellie McKay in discussing the need for women of color to have a space of their own where "our work could be presented in loud and ringing tones."

Woman as Reason

It was very exciting to see women present from as far away as the Netherlands and the Caribbean along with African-American women from a multitude of universities and fields of study.

Emily, a young Black feminist from Chicago, spoke to us about the conference: "I was impressed by the range of different types of women there and of the desire to expand what the academy is to include all kinds of people. I saw a push to break down the walls between the academy and the community. In one workshop, after a woman asked for financial help for a Black independent school she works for, \$900 was raised."

The conference had three major plenary sessions with Lani Guinier, Johnetta Cole and Angela Davis as keynote speakers, along with 61 workshops.

What was moving about the first plenary was that it gave Lani Guinier a platform to present her views. She spoke with biting sarcasm and wit about her experience of being asked by Clinton to be Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. She compared it to Alice in Wonderland where things got "curiouser and curiouser." "I came to represent America's worst fears about race. I was outside the mainstream of polite society. I was said to be Clinton's quota queen. Like Alice, my original ideas were never to emerge."

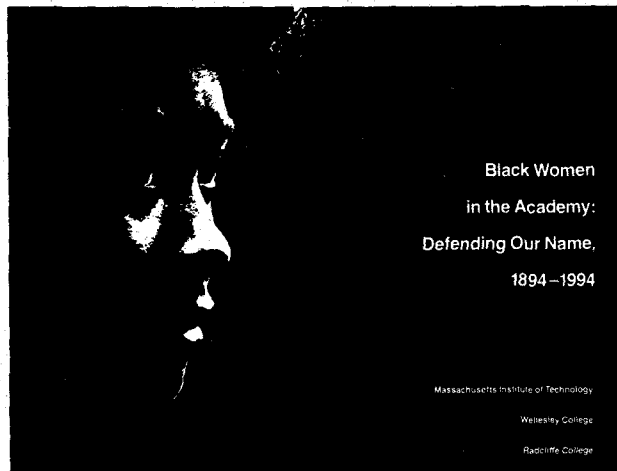
Nevertheless, Guinier is caught in the contradiction of clinging to the notion that democracy really exists in the U.S. for Black people, while encouraging everyone to write to Clinton to demand a new Kerner Commission Report. This contradiction set the tone for much of the discussion. It is not unrelated to a kind of careerism which saw many women at the plenary introducing

themselves by stating their university and degree they have or are attaining.

Although the vast multidimensionality of the conference cannot be covered here, several workshops illustrate how seriously many of the participants sought to combine thought and reality.

At one workshop called "The Truth of Our Lives: Black Women's Narratives as Primary Knowledge Sources," Lucille Fultz spoke about Toni Morrison's uses of history. She constructs narrative lives, not fictionalized histories. Morrison's work, she said, "is where

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Women's Writes

Women in Black newsletter, P.O. Box 6360 Jerusalem, Israel 91060, \$20 subscription, is put out by Israeli Women who stand vigils each week calling for an end to the occupation. It carries news from Women in Black in Germany and Belgrade, as well as "Letters from Around the Globe." Issue No. 6 carried lively responses to a study: "Why has the Israeli Women in Black vigil persevered over five years?" Maya Rosenfeld critiques the report for "the absence of all mention of the intifada." Issue No. 6 also published a critique of the Israeli peace movement by Simona Sharoni: "Excluded from the leadership, women were prevented from offering, as feminists, radical challenges to the rhetoric of 'national security.'" —Terry Moon

* * *

Katie Roiphe's *The Morning After: Sex, Fear, and Feminism on Campus* uses the same sexist arguments we are bombarded with daily. She twists everything, claiming she is for freedom, while the movement is pushing women backwards; by recognizing our victimization, we create its reality. We don't have a rape crisis, we have a "sexual identity crisis," a fear of "broken rules." She is for "strong individuals." There should be no Take Back the Night marches, no date rape prevention.

She rejects Women's Liberation: "Once you...include everyone's everyday experience, identifying sexual harassment becomes a way of interpreting the social texture of daily life, instead of isolating individual events....[It] becomes a way of seeing the world." (p.100). Roiphe is trying to push us back to days prior to "the personal is political." —Sonia Bergonzi

Letter from Mauritius

We are writing to keep you informed about a serious attack on freedom of expression on a women's issue in Mauritius. On Dec. 3, Lindsey Collen, a member of Muvman Liberasyon Fam, launched her second novel, *The Rape of Sita*. It is about sexual violence against women and women's rights in general. Muvman Liberasyon Fam has a long experience of having to oppose anti-women fundamentalist moves on the questions of marriage laws and legalization of abortion.

The Hindu Council objected violently to the title, saying it represented an outrage against the Hindu religion. They had not even bothered to read it. The problem comes from the fact that Sita is a very common woman's name here, as well as the name of the character in the Ramayana that symbolizes purity and virtue. The fundamentalists consider women's virtue tainted by rape.

Lindsey Collen started receiving threats of violence by anonymous telephone calls. On Dec. 7, the Prime Minister under pressure from Hindu fundamentalists made a statement in the National Assembly declaring the book an "outrage against public and religious morality," and went so far as to say the book was "blasphemous." He had not read it, but had "glanced" at the covers.

This is probably the first time the Prime Minister in a secular state has taken it upon himself to declare a novel "blasphemous," a privilege usually claimed by Ayatollahs in religious states. He ended by asking the police to take action against Collen under a section of the Criminal Code that carries a one year jail sentence.

Lindsey Collen and Ledikeyon Pu Travayer, the publisher, chose to withdraw the book and consider altering the title. After threats from the fundamentalists decreased, the book is being received as one of the best works of literature ever produced in the country. Enough copies are in circulation to make this possible.

We are keeping you informed because we expect this battle against state repression will be a long one. We may need to call on you for support in this struggle, and to put *The Rape of Sita* back into circulation.

—Muvman Liberasyon Fam

♀ Women Worldwide

Women workers in Colombia's lucrative flower industry continue fighting against dangerous pesticides threatening their lives and the lives of their families. Flowers are one of Colombia's main exports and the U.S. is the leading importer. At least 70% of that industry's 140,000 workers are women—mainly single mothers. Exposed to pesticides without masks or protective clothing, these women suffer from cancers, bronchial diseases and skin diseases and their children are often born with deformities and genetic diseases. The ground and water around their homes are also contaminated. Women who tried to organize a union have been fired, discriminated against, and worse, but they have not given up.

—Information from New Directions for Women

* * *

Families of Irish women branded as "immoral" in the 1800s by the Catholic Church and banished, often for a lifetime, to church-run laundries for no pay are fighting for an official apology from the church and the erection of a memorial "to celebrate their lives and reclaim their spirit." Several months ago, the church secretly exhumed the bodies of 133 of these "fallen" women, called Magdalens, from unmarked graves in Dublin, cremated and reburied them elsewhere after selling the cemetery to a land developer. The women, often single mothers, were sent to these workhouses by their parish priests as penance. Family members formed the Magdalen Memorial Committee, condemning the church's actions saying "these women were disgraced in life and now they have been dishonored in death."

Rowbotham fragments grassroots struggles

Los Angeles, Cal.—On Jan. 14, socialist-feminist historian Sheila Rowbotham presented a talk at UCLA, "Feminism and Women's Social Protest." Rowbotham's theme was her "dilemma" in confronting the fact that many 1980s grassroots movements of women, especially in the Third World, did not start from protests against their situation as women, but were focused on issues such as conditions in shantytowns, struggles in the workplace, questions of the environment, or human rights. How do we "define" these movements? Definitions are not academic exercises: "How feminist theory develops has an impact in life."

Rowbotham stated that she would wish "feminism" to signal an inclusive politics, encompassing not only issues specifically related to the relationships between men and women but "a wider vision connected to anti-imperialism and trade unions." But she considered it dangerous to impose her political assumptions on others.

I realized she was still floundering in the same "dilemma" she voiced 20 years ago in her ground-breaking work, *Women, Resistance and Revolution* (1972). There, despite unearthing the magnificent struggles of working-class women throughout history, she concluded that "The connection between the oppression of women and the central discovery of Marxism, the class exploitation of the worker in capitalism, is still...coming out of the head of women like me as an idea." (p.247)

Today, Rowbotham still insists that, as a Left, feminist intellectual, she "would like" to categorize as a unity the diverse forms of women's freedom struggles, but is restrained by their content. There is no such unity in life. Further, two decades of work has apparently convinced Rowbotham that (1) she should drop any discussion of "Marxism"; and (2) she should forego any attempt to create a unified theoretical perspective.

What makes this astonishing is that many of the creative women's struggles Rowbotham cited showed the exact contrary of what she concluded. Within these "grassroots movements of women demanding access to social resources" is the development of a multifaceted concept of women's struggles and passions, with issues of the power relationships between men and women becoming one dimension. Rowbotham noted women's economic and social protests often became bound up with domestic violence, as husbands reacted aggressively against their wives' new-found roles.

Why does Rowbotham's theoretical focus remain the fragmentation of women's struggles—"either" they struggle as workers "or" as community activists "or" as women—rather than how the depth, creativity, and thought of these women in movement often carries within what Marx called the "quest for universality"—the drive for wholeness, for a new way of life in which all can develop as full human beings. It is not only "Marxism" that Rowbotham has dropped any reference to; "revolution" and "freedom" likewise have fallen off the map.

The best she offered us—as theory derived from what she heard these movements of women saying in practice—was "thinking differently about the market and the role of the state...for a collective monitoring of how resources come from the state versus just assuming that state provision of needs will solve all problems."

How can she so narrow what she hears? Her problem is not "elitism"; she is so "anti-elitist" that she does not want to "impose" categories. But being against "imposition" need not mean abdication of theoretic/philosophic responsibility, the need to meet the creativity of the movement from practice with an articulation of the Idea of freedom and its potential for realization in life, in our times.

—Michelle Landau

Chiapas women revolt

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brothers. With married couples, the woman has to serve the owners on coffee plantations alongside the man who is exploited as a worker.

The Mexican government's immediate response to the peoples' suffering has been the arrival of thousands of soldiers in the area and the bombardment of villages. While President Salinas spoke of a truce on Jan. 12, it was a lie whenever they came across Zapatista fighters. To this we add the army's abuses: summary executions, jailing innocent people, kidnapping, robbery, and seizing the leaders of indigenous peasant organizations.

This type of desperate armed uprising is not unusual in Chiapas. Since 1712 there have been records of revolts by the Tzeltal people who fought to maintain their own religion against that of the colonizers, and we have found women played a central role in this struggle. It was started that year by a young woman named Maria Candelaria, and in 1868 Agustina Gomez Checheo in Chamulas said that the voice of God spoke to her through the stones of Chiapas. The social protest by thousands of Indians was organized around what these women began.

The Mexican Revolution of 1910 never came to Chiapas because the landowners stopped it. Again in 1974 and 1980 there were many repressive acts carried out on small *ejidos*: houses burned, jailings, leaders were tortured. One well-known event involved the massacre and burning of houses in the Tzeltal community of Wolochan in 1980. The people were protesting over land rights and the *caciques* called in the army to put them down. The most recent group of governors, one of them a military man, have carried out a systematic repression, aided by the army and their own police called, White Guards.

Since the events of 1974 and 1980, the participation of indigenous women has been more apparent and defined. They have begun to join the men in the struggle for land now that the women and peasants have formed many organizations to fight for their rights.

Indigenous women's organizations have been operating for a decade. Some of these organizations no longer exist because of the classic conflict which men devise whenever they're confronted with the ideological progress of women. But the hope for change has not ended in spite of these failures. Instead it has tended to lead to development. Surely this growth on the part of indigenous women has demanded creativity, as much in the kinds of demands they have raised concerning the problems of survival as in the forms of organization. Women have joined in supporting the demands of their male comrades and, little by little, this has evolved to help in understanding the problems they identify as women, and has expanded their perspective in seeing that gender conflicts historically have shaped all social relations.

—Women for Dialogue, Network for Latin American Popular Education Among Women

'Value time' and injuries at GM

Oklahoma City, Okla.—This last United Auto Workers contract with General Motors came out in the newspapers like it's something special. Really all it was was a bunch of givebacks. They're taking our \$600 Christmas bonus and five days of our vacation to pay for two weeks of their downtime at model changeover. It used to be we collected unemployment and SUB (Supplemental Unemployment Benefits) pay for that. That's well over \$1200 per employee.

There's that, and cutting the labor. They take a job on the line, break it down and spread it around to other workers that they feel have time to do the work. A guy who worked across from me was doing his job. They added work to it, and he could no longer do it. They put him out on medical several times. Anybody they can, they try to get you out on medical or early retirement.

Some people write 78s (grievances) on it. All that happens is the company and the union go to time and motion studies and, if the time works out, you have to do it. Every spot on that car has a time and motion study. They have what they call value time and non-value time. Then they have standing around time, which they call something else.

Non-value time is reaching back and picking up the spot welder or walking to the spot welder. Then you swing the gun into the job, and that's still non-value time. The minute you pull the trigger and spot weld the car, that's value time, and the sparks fly and sometimes

you get burnt. They add up how many one-hundredths of a minute it takes in value time and non-value time, then multiply by the line speed, which is 75 jobs per hour. If that time comes up to less than 55 minutes to the hour, then they feel they can add work to the job.

My job started out being the worst job in the pit. I stayed on it because the spot welder is straight in and straight out, and it's the twisting and turning that tears up your wrists—and your shoulder and your back muscles. The guy next to me, they put work on him. He has gone in for cortisone shots in his shoulder. He was doing the job and not having pain before they added all the work to it.

Now this is just hearsay, but I heard that one guy jumped on a supervisor, saying this added work was going to get a lot of people injured. The supervisor supposedly just plainly said, "It may get people hurt, but we're still going to add work and eliminate labor."

They added work before they started working us nine hours every day and one Saturday this month, two Saturdays next month and three the following month. As I have heard workers here say so many times, "and General Motors still isn't happy."

—Line worker

Chinese women strike

New York, N.Y.—Forty-four workers at the Silver Palace, the only unionized restaurant in Chinatown, were locked out last August after they refused to accept drastic cuts in pay and benefits and illegal terms of the new contract. Silver Palace workers have been represented by a small, independent union, the 318 Restaurant Workers Union, since 1981. They have been picketing the restaurant every lunch and dinner. Two women discussed the strike and their lives with News & Letters:

"We're fighting for justice, not only for ourselves but for the whole Chinese community. Most Chinese immigrants work under slave conditions, often for 60-80



hours a week for illegally low wages. The garment shops are just as bad as the restaurants. All the bosses think immigrant women will not fight back.

"The Silver Palace was different after we got the union. We had health insurance, paid holidays and job security. It was the only restaurant where you did not have to work more than 40 hours a week. If we worked overtime we were paid time and a half or could take comp leave. Now all of that is gone.

"The bosses didn't pay the dim sum workers (women who push carts around the dining room) what the contract called for. They decided to fire the older dim sum workers because we had the most seniority and fought for our contract rights. They said we are not as attractive as young women, and they want young, pretty women to bring in the customers.

"At the fifth bargaining session, the bosses announced we must accept all their terms, which were even worse than some non-union restaurants. All 44 dining room workers agreed to reject their demands. After 11 bargaining sessions, the bosses imposed the new contract.

"We could not have kept up the struggle without the support of our families. They have no money; their support is spiritual. We've had support on the picket line from Blacks, Latinos and whites as well as Chinese. Since I came from China I've never been outside Chinatown, but now I'm learning that other people in this country are exploited as well.

"Why are working conditions so bad in this country? In Chinatown I have to work even harder than I did in China. I came here six years ago thinking things would be better because you have democracy. But nothing is better except that my daughter can get an education."

Joanne Lum of the Chinese Staff and Workers Association added, "We had to organize an independent union 14 years ago because the Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union was not interested in us. This is a common experience."

The Women's Action Coalition (WAC) will hold a benefit for the strikers and a demonstration at the Silver Palace Feb. 13. Contributions to the strike fund can be sent to: 318 Restaurant Union, c/o Chinese Staff and Workers Association, 15 Catherine St., #2-R, New York, NY 10038.

Anne Jaclard

Labor shakes up Memphis

Memphis, Tenn.—Angry rank-and-file union activists have shaken up the city of Memphis. Several hundred union members marched on Dec. 11 from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Labor Center on Beale Street to the I-40 bridge over the Mississippi River, then blocked the bridge entrance. The demonstrators included workers from Dobbs International, who have been on strike against the caterer for nearly one year (see N&L, December 1993), and workers from Earle Industries, a plastics manufacturer in Earle, Ark., who have been fighting for a contract since they voted to be represented by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers in 1991.

Annie Rolack, chief steward for Teamsters Local 667 at Dobbs, said that they were "sick of being shut out of the media. We have 120 workers on strike because we will not allow the company to disrespect older African-American women, forcing them out of their jobs after 20 years of service or more. We have to wake up the government, the media, the public."

"We marched to the Front St. entrance to the bridge and blocked it for two or three hours," said Ida Leachman, vice-president of Furniture Workers Local 282. "People just sat down in the street. The police kept saying that if we didn't leave we would be arrested. Traffic on the bridge to Arkansas was totally tied up.

"Finally, they started to put people in police cars, but there were so many willing to get arrested that they decided to take them out of the cars and parade all those arrested to the police station. About 100 were arrested."

Workers were protesting slow action or no action by the NLRB (Labor Board) on union unfair labor practice complaints at Dobbs and Earle Industries and were calling attention to workers' struggles throughout the mid-South region. The demonstration cracked the media silence. "We had to do something like this," said Annie Rolack. "It's a matter of getting people to realize that what happened to us could happen to them. Our fight is not really about money, but about human dignity."

At the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial march in Memphis on Jan. 17, a labor contingent including Dobbs workers passed out leaflets reading "Keep the Dream Alive in 1994. Take a Stand for Justice." They called on Memphians to send Dobbs a message to settle the strike and let employees return to work. A letter to Dobbs president Frederick J. Martin from Bishop J.O. Patterson of the Church of God in Christ, urging that the strikers' rights be respected, was included in the leaflet.

At Dobbs International, at Earle Industries and at many other plants in the area, companies have used every means at their disposal—both legal and illegal—to attempt to halt growing union organization and avoid real contract negotiations. Ida Leachman's message: "There is a real fight going on here; it's not over yet."

Contact the Dobbs strikers at Teamsters Local 667, 796 East Brooks Road, Memphis, TN 38116.

—Michael Flug

Celebrate Black History Month!

Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal

To order, see literature ad on page 7.

Miners' pact price high

Uniontown, Pa.—"It's a company contract...a slave contract," declared a Consolidation Coal Company miner in Pennsylvania in reaction to the United Mine Workers (UMWA) five-year contract approved in December following a bitter, seven-month strike against the Bituminous Coal Operators Association that involved 17,500 of the union's 80,000 members.

UMWA District 4 miners in southwest Pennsylvania rejected the contract by a 2-to-1 margin. Significantly, most of the miners in District 4 who had been on strike voted against the pact. They had suffered the most, but were willing to stay out until they got a decent contract.

A major objective of the strike, job security, sought to eliminate the practice by coal operators of closing union mines, transferring coal reserves to newly-created subsidiaries and reopening the "new" mines as non-union. The new contract requires that at least 60% of the work force of such new mines be union miners. This will certainly help in the short term, but will hardly provide real job security or halt layoffs in an industry where the average life of existing mines is only seven years.

As for wages, miners will get an increase of \$1.30 an hour over the first three years of the contract, and the union can reopen wage talks for the last two years. The price to the rank-and-file miners, however, will be very high. In addition to the first-ever five-year contract, provisions will:

- Permit ten-hour shifts four days a week with no overtime pay plus special shift arrangements for Sunday coal production.

- Make miners and their families pay more for health care if they go to doctors or health facilities not approved by the coal companies. Before, they could go to the health care providers of their choice without penalty.

- Try to force miners to cut down on health care by giving each working miner a check for \$1000 at the beginning of the year, with the miner able to keep whatever is not spent on health care by the end of the year.

The bottom line of this contract is clear: each one of these provisions gives the companies greater power over the lives of the miners—both inside and outside the mines. In addition, a Labor Management Positive Change Program is established to provide the framework for worker-management "cooperation," which will result in even more concessions to the companies.

—Andy Phillips

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

enough. What more is needed?

One way to approach this question is through Marx's 1845 critique of "all hitherto existing materialism" for not conceiving "human activity itself as objective activity" ("Theses on Feuerbach," I). Raya Dunayevskaya, in her development of Marxist-Humanism, elaborated what she called "a new sense of objectivity" about the economic-political stage in which we live, state-capitalism. That new sense of objectivity "began to be seen in the context of Marx's new sense of objectivity in relationship to all human activity" ("Not By Practice Alone: The Movement from Theory" in *The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism*, p. 12).

Dunayevskaya projected this new sense of objectivity as "dealing with when subjectivity is actually objective" (my emphasis). Masses in motion, human activity, the whole person—body, emotion, thought—are as real, as objective as capitalism. Because that is so, subjectivity "in the universal sense includes the theory," the self-determination of the Idea. The Idea of freedom itself is objective; it has the power to transform reality.

FREEDOM NOT ABSTRACT

That may seem abstract, but it really isn't. The Idea of freedom was the motive force behind much of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. Michael Flug, a former CORE member active with the hospital and retail workers of the Maryland Freedom Union, spoke of this at an April conference in Memphis:

"By the mid-1960s independent unions rooted in the Civil Rights Movement began to emerge.... What drew so many workers to the 'freedom union' experiments of SNCC and CORE during the 1960s was not only that these unions were willing to accept them as members when most 'mainstream' unions remained uninterested in them. It was that these organizations called themselves 'freedom unions,' and sought to organize low-wage workplaces as an integral part of a struggle to transform the whole of American society."

What is abstract, it seems to me, are slogans such as "Illinois is a War Zone" and "It's Our Solidarity vs. Theirs," which attempt to unite labor struggles. If I support your struggle on principle, which I do, what does that mean for my freedom, as a woman, as a non-union worker? Doesn't that relationship have to be worked out? Isn't the pathway toward a "resurgent labor movement" recognizing the power of the Idea of freedom to transform reality and working out what freedom means as against this racist, sexist, locked-out, no contract, no union, no job society?

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From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya Marxist-Humanist Archives

Editor's note: As part of "Three L" month, commemorating the deaths of Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht (both Jan. 15, 1919), and V. I. Lenin (Jan. 21, 1924), we are reprinting three letters on Rosa Luxemburg from Raya Dunayevskaya: 1) to Isabel do Carmo, chairwoman of the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat/Revolutionary Brigades (PRP-BR) during the Portuguese Revolution (microfilm #6448-9); 2) to Erich Fromm and Fromm's reply (#15073-4), and 3) to News and Letters Committees, about her writing of what would become Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution (#6648).

The Portuguese revolution

October 4, 1976

Dear Comrade Isabel do Carmo,

In this letter, I wish to limit myself to the topic, "Rosa Luxemburg and Today's Theorists in the Women's Liberation Movement," which is the tentative title of my next book. I am most anxious to learn your views on this topic. Two of the statements you have made in your writings relate to it—one, to the question of the relationship of theory to practice in general, and the other to Rosa Luxemburg in particular. You wrote that PRP, since it was a revolutionary organization in Portugal today, didn't relate to only one Marxist theoretician alone, but to Marx and Lenin, to Trotsky and Luxemburg. May I ask which of Luxemburg's theories—The General Strike, the relationship of spontaneity to organization, the Russian Revolution, the Shop Stewards and the German Revolution, as well as the theory of capital accumulation—do you consider most relevant for today? You will note that in *Marxismo y libertad* Chapter 8, the second section "Apariencia y realidad," I strongly criticize her theory, Accumulation of Capital, which doesn't mean that she hasn't made a great revolutionary contribution, both theoretically and practically.¹

The period that interests me most is 1910-13. That is the period she broke with Karl Kautsky—some four years before Lenin had. It is the period, which, again before other revolutionary leaders, [she] had witnessed the rise of imperialism. She was the first, not only to sense the opportunism of the Second International, but what she was later to call that "stinking corpse." And she began her fight against imperialism, on the Morocco crisis, on the Algerian question, in the specific relationship to the opportunism of the German Social Democracy. Finally, it was in those three years that she also made a most important speech on women's suffrage, not just as a parliamentary right, but as a force for revolution itself. That is to say, although she rightly refused to be restricted to the "Woman Question," she not only worked closely with Clara Zetkin, but in those three years when she broke with Kautsky [and] followed and fought the new imperialism, she also became active, as theoretician at least, in the women's movement which, to me, by no

1. Along with the letter to Isabel do Carmo, Dunayevskaya sent her *Marxismo y libertad*, then recently published in Mexico, as well as *Philosophy and Revolution in Today's Global Freedom Struggles*, her Perspectives Report to the News and Letters Committees Convention, Sept. 4, 1976.

To Erich Fromm on Penthesilea and patriarchy

October 20, 1977

Dear Erich Fromm:

Instead of trying to explain the long silence (especially since the German edition of *Philosophy and Revolution* has once again been delayed), may I start right off by asking you whether I may engage in a dialogue with you on Rosa Luxemburg? There is a very specific field that I thought you would be most profound in—the difference between correspondence, especially with women, and the writings (very nearly non-existent) on that very subject, Women. I'm not referring to the fact that they were on flowers, cats, or other small talk. Rather I am referring to the very sharp attacks on their reformist husbands, there using many references to mythical or long-ago historical characters—Penthesilea, the queen of the Amazons. The letter I have in mind is the one to Mathilde Wurm on New Year's Day 1917. I was so surprised at that particular reference that I went to the trouble to look up, which, specifically, event she was referring to and it was Achilles who slew Penthesilea when she took the side of the Trojans—and then praised her bravery, etc.² Russell, in his work on the Oriental Heritage as well as the Greek, mentions that the Greek Urn that Keats wrote that magnificent ode to (which he, Durant, prefers above the urn) may have been the other one where Achilles spears Penthesilea.

Now, my question is: what has all this to do with the Second International's betrayal, 1914, and how does it happen that whereas [she] kept away from the "Woman Question" other than what all Marxists were for—equal wages, suffrage, etc.—[she] would certainly go to mythology and the roles of women as greater than life? Was it common to show that one's interest in literature, in

2. From prison, Luxemburg wrote to Mathilde Wurm (12/28/16), "I'm telling you that as soon as I can stick my nose out again I will hunt and harry your society of frogs with trumpet blasts, whip crackings, and bloodhounds—like Penthesilea I wanted to say, but by God, you people are no Achilles," a reference to dramatist Heinrich von Kleist's reversal of the Greek myth of Achilles slaying Penthesilea.

accident at all, turned out to be the most revolutionary section of the German Social Democracy once World War I broke out.

The phrase that I consider most distinctive to characterize the Women's Liberation Movement is "Woman as Reason as well as Force." It is this which prompts my preoccupation with Women's Liberation. I am especially annoyed with today's women theorists who, even when they consider themselves revolutionaries, act as if Marx contributed nothing to that subject, although he is the founder of all of us, and although he not only, as far back as 1844 when he first broke with bourgeois society, wrote of man/woman as the most fundamental question which exposed the alienation of capitalism, but also was actually active in women's movements both in England and France. (Have you by any chance read *The Women Incendiaries* by Edith Thomas who, despite the Anglo-Saxon name, has written a fairly recent work on the Paris Commune, in French?)

Finally, no question today can be seriously considered if one separates revolution from philosophy. Because it is the unity of philosophy and revolution that alone will be able to move us of today from the constant, aborted revolutions, to one that will actually be. I became quite excited when I first read the Draft Program of the PRP which stated: "It is also the organization capable of making a synthesis between theory and revolutionary practice." (Have you read "Will the revolution in Portugal advance?" in the January-February 1976 *News & Letters*? The dialectics of liberation demands the working out of so new a relationship of theory and practice, that we must start with the new concept which Lenin first projected when he returned to Hegelian dialectics as of the essence for the revolution-to-be in Russia in 1917, but never worked out in as total a way as our age demands....

Luxemburg revises Marx

January 14, 1980

Dear Friends:

Chapter III³, which I have just completed, is at first glance so totally different from anything else I have written or spoken about Luxemburg that I consider it important to call it to your attention. First is the question of the title: "Luxemburg's Interregnum on the Way to New Theory; and Excursus on Why a Century to Publish Marx's Works?" Both the fact that it is an interregnum, and that it comes, not in 1910-11, but after that period, as she is beginning to work out her greatest theoretical work, *Accumulation of Capital* (her greatest work, not the greatest theoretical work; indeed, it would be a deviation from Marx's theory of accumulation of capital), mark a new stage in comprehension of the dialectic. Perhaps I should have said, instead of "comprehension," a great inadequacy in the comprehension of dialectic. It was comparatively easy for Rosa Luxemburg to defend Marx against a revisionist's demand for the "removal of the dialectic scaffolding." It is a very different thing when, in facing a new reality—imperialism—one feels no compulsion to dig into the "dialectic." The task is that of the reworking of the whole of Marx's deep-rootedness in the Hegelian dialectic and Marxian creativity of trans-

character building, in self-development of idea though one kept strictly to economics-politics in books, pamphlets? Did you by any chance know people who knew her? I remember [Herbert] Marcuse (who was evidently a young Spartacist in the Army at the time Rosa was murdered) speaking gloriously of her as orator? There seems a great contradiction between her awareness that there is more to the "Woman Question" than economics in letters as contrasted to books, pamphlets, etc. I would love to get the feeling of the times—Germany, women, intellectuals between WWI and WWII....

26th October 1977

Dear R.D.,

Thank you for your letter of October 20th....[T]he topic you write about fascinates me so much that I want to send you a line. I feel that the male Social Democrats never could understand Rosa Luxemburg, nor could she acquire the influence for which she had the potential because she was a woman; and the men could not become full revolutionaries because they did not emancipate themselves from their male, patriarchal, and hence dominating, character structure. After all, the original exploitation is that of women by men and there is no social liberation as long as there is no revolution in the sex war ending in full equality, which has never existed since prehistory. I believe she was one of the few fully developed human beings, one who showed what a human being can be in the future. Indeed, as you say, she was not concerned with the woman's question which is, after all, only the human question; in this respect quite the contrary to Clara Zetkin, the bureaucratic leader of the allegedly revolutionary woman's movement. Unfortunately I have known nobody who still knows her personally. What a bad break between the generations....

Yours,
Erich Fromm....

Remembering Rosa Luxemburg as revolutionary, as theorist

forming dialectical methodology into dialectics of liberation.

Therefore, whereas previously I had only hinted at it, in this Chapter I have developed the fact that Luxemburg always disagreed with Marx's concept of self-determination of nations in general and of Poland in particular. I want you to get a whiff of that from a magnificent



Rosa Luxemburg

letter Engels wrote to Kautsky about two weeks after he had co-authored with Marx that fantastically prophetic new Preface to the Russian edition of the Communist Manifesto, which had projected the possibility of Russia having a revolution in advance of the industrially developed nations. Here it is, dated February 7, 1882:

Polish socialists who do not place the liberation of their country at the head of their program appear to me as would German socialists who do not demand first and foremost repeal of the socialist law, freedom of the press, association and assembly... It is unimportant whether a reconstitution of Poland is possible before the next revolution. We have in no case the task to deter the Poles from their efforts to fight for the vital conditions of their future development, or to persuade them that national independence is a very secondary matter from the international point of view. On the contrary, independence is the basis of any common international action... We, in particular, have no reason whatever to block their irrefutable striving for independence. In the first place, they have invented and applied in 1863 the method of fighting...and secondly they were the only reliable and capable lieutenants in the Paris Commune.

I am using very little of the draft chapter on the *Ethnological Notebooks* of Karl Marx, except for the first section, and even in that the paragraphs are considerably transposed. What I am now calling *Excursus* into why it took a century to publish all of Marx's works is not tied in Chapter III to the Man/Woman relationship, but to what resulted from Marx's delving into primitive societies insofar as it related to the Russian conditions. To put it differently, what has to be the pivotal point for this excursus is tied to the concreteness of the book and the specific subject of Rosa Luxemburg in the 1905 Revolution. No doubt I will later in the book return again to the rest of what I had written last year on the *Ethnological Notebooks*, except that I will definitely reduce [Hal] Draper to a long footnote—but it is really more relevant to our age than to the manner in which malechauvinism appeared in Luxemburg's period. Here, what we have to learn methodologically is that, no matter how comprehensively you think you have dealt with a subject, the aspect that makes it concrete in a historic period is the only proof.

Let me cite one other section of Chapter III, which relates to the question of dialectics in another new way. In 1903, Luxemburg had written an essay on "The Progress and Stagnation of Marxism." At first reading, that looks like the highest compliment to Marx's Marxism, since the essence of it is that not only has Marxism not stagnated, but we, the Marxists, haven't yet reached the totality of historical materialism. On second reading, you suddenly begin to realize what a very big gap there was in the thought of Marxists once Marx died, because far from regarding Marx's thought as a whole new continent, they regarded Marx as a revolutionary economist who taught them all about the class struggle. Just as Engels thought that he was following out a bequest of Marx when he wrote *The Origin of the Family*, so Luxemburg thought she was on the way to "extending" Marx's theory of *Accumulation of Capital* by concentrating on the new reality and sloughing off the dialectic as "rococo."

But that will be for Chapter IV. Here what is crucial—whether you consider it as an entirely new idea or as a further development of Chapters I and II—is that a transition period can be either a great leap forward or a fall backward—not, however, as retrogression, but as an illumination of what happens when the dialectic is kept only in the back of your mind. The very nearly subordinate point I am trying to make is that Luxemburg's "Progress and Stagnation of Marxism" is used as a transition point between her very wrong position on the National Question, dialectically as well as factually, and the move towards a new theory which deviates not from Kautsky but from Marx....

3. Dunayevskaya explained later: "It should be noted that during the process of the book chapters were changed and that the chapter numbers referred to...do not necessarily correspond to the chapter numbers in the published work."

Essay Article

by Peter Hudis

Recent events in Russia have proved so startling as to raise new questions, not only about where Russia is headed, but about the very nature of the much-heralded "post-Cold War world." Though Clinton tried his best during his recent visit to Moscow to pretend that "all was on course" in Russia's plunge to create a "free market," even the Pollyannas in his administration now see that a new reality is afoot.

That new reality was brought to the fore by the Dec. 12 parliamentary elections, in which the party of neo-fascist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy won more votes than anyone else, capturing 25% of the popular vote. The rise of this self-proclaimed "Russian nationalist" who has openly compared himself to Hitler¹ has virtually overnight exposed the hollowness of the notion that Russia's drive to the "free market" will lead to more "democracy."

As if this were not enough, the Dec. 12 elections also saw the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and its ally, the Agrarian Party, capture 20% of the vote. Since then they have teamed up with Zhirinovskiy to elect a new speaker of parliament opposed to the pace of Yeltsin's economic reforms. Thus, like so many heads sprung from the neck of Hydra, the "Red-Brown" alliance of Communists and fascists which Yeltsin thought he had crushed back in October is back in new guise.

Though Zhirinovskiy is far to the right of Yeltsin, Yeltsin can hardly be counted on to sear the roots of this re-nascent fascism with blazing branches, given the fact that he has assumed increasingly reactionary positions of his own. Whatever be the future of Zhirinovskiy himself, the forces that gave birth to him will surely impact the Russian scene for some time.

What, then, explains the emergence of this retrogressive phenomenon? What does it say about the whole "reform" process in Russia? And what lessons does it hold for us here in the U.S.?

ECONOMIC ROOTS OF POLITICAL REGRESSION

It is not hard to see that Russia's move toward greater authoritarianism and even neo-fascism flows from the severity of its economic crisis. Since 1992 industrial production has declined 40%, real wages are down by 80%, and inflation is averaging close to 20% a month. Almost half the population has fallen below the officially designated poverty line.

Yet a powerful ideological illusion has obscured the link between the specific nature of Russia's economic crisis and the rise of fascists like Zhirinovskiy: the notion that the transition from the "planned" economy to the "free market" engenders greater democracy. The events since 1992 show the very opposite is the case.

To trace this out we must keep in mind that the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 did not lead to any fundamental uprooting of the old order. Despite the claim that the collapse of "Communism" marked a "world historic event" comparable to the 1917 Russian Revolution, the class nature of the old regime was not destroyed. Though the state-capitalist rulers changed their political allegiances from "Marxism-Leninism" to "free market" capitalism virtually overnight, the structure of labor-management relations was left intact. This has determined the nature of Yeltsin's efforts at "economic reform" since 1992.²

One of Yeltsin's most important steps in moving Russia toward a "market economy" was the removal of price restraints on an array of goods and services in January 1992. This freeing up of prices, it was argued, would end the endemic shortages plaguing the economy, as an economic incentive would be provided for producers to increase output.

Yet this isn't what resulted. Since the managers of industry retained monopolistic control over the production process, with a handful of factories often producing the bulk of a given commodity group, they responded to the liberalization of prices by cutting back on production and hoarding output in order to obtain the highest price possible. This enabled a few to reap hefty profits while the bulk of the populace suffered under the twin blow of shortages and high prices.

The next crucial step came in July 1992, when Yeltsin announced a new privatization law calling for state enterprises to be transformed into joint-stock companies. This extended Gorbachev's 1988 decision to allow for the formation of commercial enterprises and cooperatives alongside state-run industries.

These moves toward privatization were likewise shaped by the way the managers of old remained in command. Many of them have used their access to power and privilege to set up new "privatized" ventures alongside their state-run enterprises. They then resell the goods produced by the state enterprise to their privately owned company, which in turn resells them at a huge markup to the public. Huge profits are thereby made by a few "captains of industry" without any increase in either productive investment or output.

Though Yeltsin's privatization program has so far affected mainly small and medium-sized enterprises, its re-

Notes on work in progress

Where is Russia going?

sults are already clear: 1) In most cases its beneficiaries are the apparatchiks of old, as seen in how 80% of joint-stock companies are owned by former officials of the KGB, and 2) privatization has resulted in a burst of trade and speculative profiteering without adding anything of real value to the economy.

In a word, to the extent that Russia is moving toward a "market economy," it is in the form of speculative trade and financial swindling grafted onto a pre-existing state-capitalist structure.

CONTEXT OF THE WORLD MARKET

It would be easy to view these developments as a peculiarity of Russia's effort to move toward a "market economy." However, just as the rise of totalitarianism in the

from production. They think they can still go merrily on with their computerized stock market, false super-profit-eering through mergers, playing the margins, and alternating ownerships from corporations to 'private entrepreneurs.' She added, "What the ideologues...have to recognize is this: once they have 'uncoupled' industrial production from their whole economy, and capital from investment in production, reducing capital investment to money alone, they are left with what they supposedly rejected—monetarism."⁴

THE STATIST BASIS OF 'FREE MARKET' RESTRUCTURING

After 1992 Yeltsin pursued a classic monetarist policy. Better known as "shock therapy," it centered on a

"tight money" policy that limited subsidies to state enterprises to force them to compete directly with the world market. Yet the effort to coax Russia toward a "free market" through this "sink or swim" approach ran into an insurmountable obstacle, as it risked driving a huge number of enterprises into bankruptcy. The International Monetary Fund admits that if the Russian government met its fiscal targets, 40% of industrial plants would be forced to close down. The resulting unemployment and breakdown in production could threaten the regime's very existence.

In light of this, many managers of industry and agriculture are resisting a full-scale plunge toward the

"free market." They want the state to play a larger role by continuing to prop up unprofitable state enterprises. Since the Dec. 12 elections, which showed little popular support for his policies, Yeltsin has moved closer to this group, leading to the resignation from his cabinet of advocates of instant "shock therapy."

Yet it isn't just advocates of a slower pace of reform who want a stronger state. That is just as true of advocates of a more rapid approach. Both say a stronger state is needed in order to guard against the instability and outright revolt which will accompany further economic austerity.⁵

Despite the illusions of Western analysts, the ruling factions all realize that integrating Russia into the lawless laws of the world market requires brute force—the brute force of armed state power. They are simply fighting amongst themselves over who will control the commanding heights of state power in this period of "economic reform." Far from leading to a dissolution of monopolization and statism, the drive to the "free market" reinvents their consolidation.

This too is rooted in the global nature of state-capitalism. As Dunayevskaya wrote in her analysis of Andropov's ascendancy in 1982: "Ever since the Depression caused the total collapse of private capitalism, the truth is that the only way capitalism could save itself...was to bow to the State Plan. It isn't Plan, Plan, Plan, but State, State, State that marked the new, the ultimate stage of capitalism. By whatever name it went...state intervention was here to stay."⁶

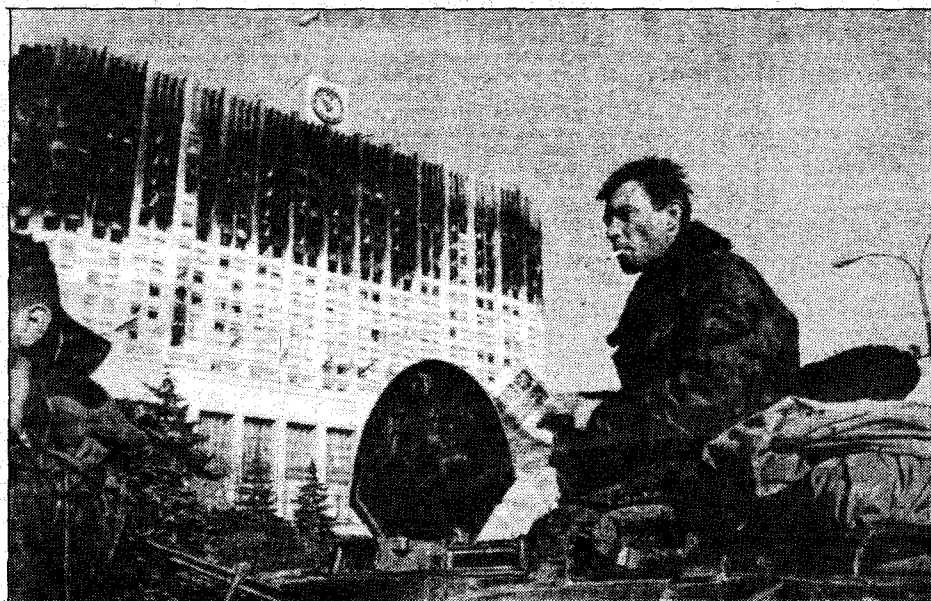
THE SEARCH FOR AN IRON HAND

The problem facing the Russian rulers is that just when they need a stronger state, they are bereft of a force which would marshal the powers of the state around the task of implementing economic austerity. This flows from a most significant result of the events of 1991—the collapse of the Communist Party.

This collapse has left a vacuum in power relations which the rulers are anxious to fill. It explains Yeltsin's growing reliance on the military, graphically demonstrated in October, when after some initial hesitation the military came to Yeltsin's support by crushing the Rutskoi-Khasbulatov-led parliamentary opposition. Soon afterwards, the military's growing power was seen in the announcement of a "new military doctrine" proclaiming the "right" of Russian troops to intervene in conflicts in the countries of the former Soviet Union and in Yeltsin's decision to shelve efforts to dismantle Russia's massive military-industrial complex.

These and other events may suggest that the military is stepping in to supply the unifying role formerly held by the Party. Yet this seems somewhat unlikely, since the military is deeply fragmented and faces grave internal problems of its own. However, this unstable situa-

(continued on page 10)



Russian tanks outside gutted parliament, 1993.

Stalin period was not just a "Russian question" but an integral part of a new world stage of state-capitalism, so the crisis afflicting Russia in the 1990s cannot be fully grasped outside its world context.

We especially have to keep in mind the new situation ushered in with the 1974-75 world economic recession, which manifested a steep decline in capitalism's rate of profit. Faced with a severe crisis in accumulation, capitalism embarked upon a new stage of economic restructuring and austerity. This was reflected in the attempt to force down wages and living conditions and the drive to restructure capitalism according to the dictates of high-tech production.

While this two-decade-long process has produced many economic changes, it has not succeeded in extricating capitalism from its underlying problem: the tendency of the rate of profit to decline. As a result, capital has tended to migrate to areas outside the productive sphere where the short-term rates of profit have tended to be higher—i.e., speculative capital, financial markets, corporate buyouts, etc. This situation, wherein capital becomes uncoupled from real investment by being reduced to a purely monetary transaction, is an integral part of the changed world economy since 1974-75.

The fact that in Russia "economic transactions are increasingly governed by the pursuit of profit through trade, [leaving] production more or less unchanged," may be an extreme case, given the exigencies of transforming a "planned" economy into a "market economy."³ But it is hardly unique to Russia; it is expressive of the crisis afflicting state-capitalism on a world scale.

Raya Dunayevskaya pinpointed the nature of this crisis in 1986: "Today's profit-hungry capitalists, both private and state, think they can...uncouple employment

3. See Michael Burawoy and Pavel Krotov, "The Economic Basis of Russia's Political Crisis" in *New Left Review*, 198 (1993). While the authors show that such "maximization of profit through trade...grafts itself onto preexisting systems of production without necessarily altering them," they tie this to a specious notion that Russia is entering a stage of "merchant capital" comparable to what Europe experienced in the 16th and 17th centuries. This flows from their failure to grasp the category of state-capitalism, as seen in their calling Russia "state-socialist," "pre-capitalist" and even "feudal."

Read more on Russia, counter-revolution and state-capitalism

Marxism and Freedom

by Raya Dunayevskaya

"Once the Russian people, 'to a man,' did not run the economy and the state; once the German Revolution too was defeated; once world capitalism regained its breath [after World War I] and the vortex of the world market had full sway, the logic of the Russian development was startling, unforeseen, but inevitable. The Revolution then found the really serious counter-revolution inside itself. Stalin was the perfect representative of that counter-revolution..."

To order, see literature ad on page 7.

1. As Zhirinovskiy stated in an interview last year, "Hitler came to power when the conditions in Germany were like they are now in Russia. The conditions for someone ultra-right to come to power now are here."

2. Space considerations prevent us from taking up events in Kazakhstan, Belarus and Ukraine, where the economic crisis is even more severe than Russia's. However, insofar as the old Stalinist nomenklatura likewise remains in power in those countries, this analysis largely applies to those lands as well.

4. See Raya Dunayevskaya, "Capitalist Production/Alienated Labor: This Nuclear World and its Political Crises" in *The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1991), pp. 149-50.

5. A typical expression of this is Vladimir Sungorkin's recent statement in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*: "Russia is doomed to go through an era of authoritarianism if it wants to remain a great power...only under the shadow of a state of emergency and a tougher government will it be possible to stabilize inflation."

6. See Dunayevskaya's "Andropov's Ascendancy Reflects Final Stage of State-Capitalist Degeneracy" in *The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism*, pp. 145-6.

MORE DIALOGUE ON 'OUR UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION'

I may be optimistic, but I suspect that it's the beginning of the end of Yeltsin, whom I had expected to emerge as a dictator; whether it is sanguine to hope that he can't, when the probable alternative is the more openly fascist Zhirinovskiy, is of course debatable. Russians are still being quoted as saying they were inspired by his courage when they saw him standing on the tanks defying the Stalinist coup—while they say they have since become disillusioned. But it can't be long before they begin to ask questions about that coup: Why was Gorbachev seized the first day and not Yeltsin? Why were the coup tanks and soldiers without ammunition? Was Yeltsin told of this in advance?

One way or another—even allowing for the continued existence of Stalinism in China, Cuba and elsewhere, and the West's remarkable selectivity in apparently seeing Chinese Communists as allies of democracy—it opens up an entirely new political situation, as for years socialists have been handicapped by the fact that one of the vilest capitalist regimes in the world used verbiage culled from socialist theory.

Laurens Otter
England

* * *

The Social and Political Research Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences presented a study in mid-December concerning some aspects of Zhirinovskiy's party social background. The study is based on the social composition of the party's congress last April. Correcting the general assertion that it is the marginal groups which are the main support of the Liberal Democratic Party the study shows it is composed by 40% of clerks and technical employees, 30% of scientists, students, businessmen and industrial managers and 10% of workers. More than two-thirds of the congress delegates had a partial or completed university education. Ninety percent were men. One-half of them were between 30 and 50 years of age. According to the study the key role of Zhirinovskiy's electoral success was played by the "national idea."

Stephen Steiger
Prague

* * *

Guess who was in China at the same moment Clinton was toasting Yeltsin in Moscow? Richard Nixon. And guess who flew to China direct from Russia as soon as Clinton's visit to Moscow was over? Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen. Right before that trip Bentsen publicly disputed the new Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, for suggesting that Russia should go a little softer on shock therapy. While in Beijing, he made

a big play about how important China—and Indonesia—are for new American corporate investment.

It suggests to me that China and the Pacific rim are more important in the eyes of U.S. policy-makers at this point than Russia—precisely because unlike Russia at this moment, they have "stable" dictatorial regimes which can "protect" American investments.

Observer
Chicago

* * *

When I read the news about all the graft and corruption running rampant among the new "aparatchnik businessmen" in Russia, I keep thinking of how the situation is even worse in China. Because the economy is "booming" there, the U.S. press still wants to pretend it is some sort of utopia.

Chinese exile
New York

* * *

There may be no "fundamental" difference between Yeltsin and Zhirinovskiy, but making no difference between the two reminds me of the totally—and intentionally—wrong position of the Comintern in the 1930s that did not want to differentiate between fascists and "social fascists"—turning Social Democrats into Nazis. This is of serious consequence not only in "practical" politics.

Correspondent
Czech Republic

WHEN THE GROUND SHOOK LOS ANGELES



The Jan. 17 earthquake released some stress along geologic fault lines, but it has intensified the stress along social fault lines of Los Angeles. L.A.'s "non-earthquake homeless" are being turned away from the shelters for the victims of the earthquake. Thousands in working-class Latino neighborhoods are sleeping in the street, because their buildings haven't been inspected and are unsafe. The Latino population is especially hard hit, yet at most shelters the staff only speaks English to them.

When thousands lined up in front of the federal emergency offices, they were turned away by the National Guard. A few who did get in were told to come back in a few weeks.

Cyrus Noveen
Los Angeles

IN MEMORIAM: VIRGIL A. VOGEL

Virgil J. Vogel, an expert on American Indian history and life-long socialist, died at his home in Northbrook, Ill. on Monday, Jan. 10, at the age of 75. Vogel obtained a doctorate in American history from the University of Chicago and was a retired professor of history at Truman College. He was the author of several highly regarded works on American Indian history, including *The Indian in American History*, a pamphlet; *American Indian Medicine*, a classic work which was republished in paperback in 1990 by the University of Oklahoma Press; *This Country Was Ours*, one of the most respected books on American Indian history, and several other works on Indian names for cities and other geographical features.

While obituaries for Vogel of several paragraphs in length appeared in both *The New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*, neither paper mentioned that in the early to mid 1940s Virgil Vogel was National Chair of the Young People's Socialist League, youth affiliate of the Socialist Party, or that he was a member of the Socialist Party for most of his life. In its Jan. 12 obituary, the *Chicago Tribune* did state that, "In 1970 Prof. Vogel became part of a group of Chicagoans who revitalized" the Charles H. Kerr Co., a publishing house that "had a long history of publishing radical and dissident books"; nevertheless, the *Tribune* did not mention that Vogel himself was well-known in left political circles as an active and committed demo-

cratic socialist.

An indication of Vogel's perspective on American Indian history can be gleaned from a quotation from his 1968 pamphlet, *The Indian in American History*. Vogel maintained that "historians have used four principal methods to create or perpetuate false impressions of aboriginal Americans, namely: obliteration, defamation, disembodiment, and disparagement." After detailing the shocking racist and genocidal attitudes towards American Indians in textbooks written for American schools, Vogel points out that, "These historians are gone, but their influence is not. Their crude racism has gone out of fashion, but derogation of Indian character continues." This was written in 1968; today, we have "politically correct" textbooks devoid of overt racism. But as Virgil Vogel no doubt knew, the horrible situation of Native Americans has scarcely changed since then, and "politically correct" textbooks will do little to improve that situation. However, thanks in part to Vogel's work, a few books have recently been published that faithfully document and condemn the genocidal practices that continue today. Most importantly, Vogel's pamphlet deals at length with the remarkable contribution of American Indians to American and world culture, and contains an excellent bibliography on this topic.

All those who seek a better world have lost a socialist friend and a champion of oppressed people.

—Marilyn Nissim-Sabat

Readers' Views

The earthquake which hit Los Angeles on Jan. 17 hit many middle-class whites living in the suburbs. Nature's ruthlessness, or what some would call an "act of God," brings everybody down to earth regardless of how much money one has, and gives certain people a shock of recognition that we are, after all, only human—common people in need of food, water and shelter from the basic elements. Nature with its power of life and death is beyond capitalist scientific control. Money cannot control the wind, the rain, the natural sunlight. Capitalist science can only deform it for profit.

As a Marxist-Humanist, for myself, Nature also includes Human Nature, and the most natural act of an oppressed people is the act of rebellion. That is what the world witnessed in April 1992, and then Los Angeles burned from something very natural—the rage of a people. We don't need an earthquake to experience a storm coming of earth-shaking proportions.

Gene Ford
Los Angeles

DEMAND MORE AIDS FUNDING

The City-County Health Department of Oklahoma County has closed down the treatment clinic that served HIV-infected patients in Oklahoma City and rural towns within 90 miles. They terminated the \$263,000 Ryan White grant that they couldn't get qualified medical personnel to staff the clinic, but several health officials said that John Harkness, an infectious disease specialist with the University of Oklahoma Health Center, and several other local physicians and dentists frequently donated time to work with patients. Many think the clinic was closed precisely when these people needed more care, not less, because it was just a lot of trouble to operate it.

Angry
Oklahoma



CHIAPAS: VISAGE OF THE OTHER MEXICO

What is new for us in the Chiapas revolt is the spontaneity of the rebellion, which is reflected in the fact that the media and the Mexican "authorities" still are looking for the "vanguard" leaders (blonde hair, green eyes?) of the rebellion. In other words, they are looking for outsiders who "should be" leading the indigenous movement. The rulers are convinced that the peasant masses do not and cannot think for themselves. Contrary to the characteristics of the Latin American guerrillas of the '60s and '70s, the indigenous self-organization in Chiapas does not follow a vanguard party, it is spontaneous. This spontaneity of the rebels put the Mexican state, with all its repressive apparatus, on the spot, provoking a cabinet crisis and therefore showing the illusion of an image, the political, economic and social stability of Mexico.

Latin American activist
New York

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There is no doubt that the peasants of Chiapas are about to make history. They are the "wretched of the earth" that the bourgeoisie dominates. As the Chiapas governor said in referring to the indigenous rebels, "They are foreigners, strangers. What are their ideas? Where do they come from?" The indigenous peasants, the "Zapatistas," are the Other in Mexico.

Sin Mas
Dominican Republic

* * *

I've been interested for a long time in indigenous and Native American issues, and the question of how can there be a dialogue between the indigenous movement and Marxist philosophy. What is happening in Chiapas is very revolution-

ary, and it's significant that it's happening at the same time that we see the rise of fascism in the world. The psychology of fascism involves fetishizing a "pure" past, while it projects a future without change in property or social relations. The movement in Chiapas is looking to its own Mayan history, but not as a fixation with a past that was; they very much understand their situation in the present context. We need to find new ways to theorize these new developments and open up the dialogue between indigenous movements and Marxist-Humanism.

Student
California



BOSNIA'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM CONTINUES

In spite of repeated attacks on its personnel, of lack of power supplies, fuel and paper, the Sarajevo daily *Oslobodjenje* is defying the twenty-month siege and is still publishing daily. For its multicultural editorial policy, which is a mirror of both the pre-war Bosnia-Herzegovina atmosphere and the Muslim-Croatian-Serbian composition of the editorial staff, it has just been awarded the Andrei Sakharov Prize. The daily, which celebrated its 50th anniversary last August, wants to use the prize money to supply the fuel needed for its electric generators and to buy printing paper. *Oslobodjenje* may live!

Observer
East Europe

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It is amazing that the Bosnians have been able to hold out this long, given the Serb-Croat alliance against them and the strangulation of the arms embargo. It is a testament to the nobility of the idea for which the Bosnians are fighting. Why there is resistance to supporting their just military struggle in so-called "progressive" circles is beyond me.

Solidarity activist
Chicago

* * *

I have known your group for some time, but the thing that has most impressed me about News and Letters Committees over the past year has been your insistent and consistent work around support for the Bosnia struggle. You took a position when few others in the Left were willing to do so and have kept it at the top of your agenda.

J.M.
Chicago

* * *

We have several new buttons calling for peace in Bosnia and the Mideast. One other thing that speaks for itself: "Ethnic cleansing" must stop!

Artists for Mideast Peace
144 Moody St.
Waltham, Mass. 02154

Editor's note: Buttons can be ordered from Artists for Mideast Peace for \$1 each, plus 50¢ postage.

THE ITALIAN SCENE

So far the working class has only enjoyed seeing the debacle of the Italian ruling class, but they realize power is still firmly in the hands of the capitalist class and the only common key word—in the light of the mass sackings—is "work for all of us with less pay." Even this key word has no mass support. According to the bourgeois propaganda the elections will solve all problems—unemployment, public debt, inflation, corruption, etc.

Correspondent
Italy

Chicago readers, come to
Marx and Multiculturalism
A new series of six classes at the New World Resource Center. Call (312) 348-3370 for readings and more information.

DIALOGUE ON 'OUR UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION'

What is striking about the responses to Dunayevskaya's 1976 speech "On the Uniqueness of Marxist-Humanism" which you published in the November issue is how each finds her and his special concerns being addressed. These responses reflect the encompassing character of Raya's 1976 speech. I'm especially pleased by the December issue's reprinting of her letter about Maurice Merleau-Ponty. It is my guess that the history of philosophy will deal more kindly with him than Sartre, about whom a growing disillusionment is already taking place.

Editor
New England

* * *

The content of "Exploring the original contribution of Marxist-Humanism" from the December issue is very groundbreaking. In the three articles, Terry Moon, Gene Ford and F. Shelley apply Marxist-Humanist theory to three issues: women's liberation, Black/Los Angeles rebellion and Frantz Fanon/spontaneous national revolutionary movements. I can't really say all of Dunayevskaya's writings are clear, but these articles are a good application of the theory to the particular. They help to create the beginning of a "clearly articulated alternative to capitalism," as so pointedly mentioned by John Alan's concluding sentence in "Clinton Distorts M.L. King Legacy" in the same issue.

Subscriber
North Carolina

* * *

There is much in Dunayevskaya's 1976 speech which is unclear to me. She says Marxist-Humanism said a new beginning must be made from Hegel's concept of Absolute Idea. This sounds like an idealist digression; didn't Marx say that all beginnings come from material reality? I would like to see more discussion on this.

Subscriber
Illinois

* * *

The discussion about the need for a "philosophic nucleus" in Dunayevskaya's 1976 essay is about as tall an order as one can imagine. Just

think of having to "present the whole of philosophy and Marxist-Humanism" every time you talk to someone! Or suppose you had to consult the "whole of philosophy" every time a concrete situation presents itself. You would surely have to "be the philosophy and the philosopher." Can it be done? While it is inspiring to note the originality of Dunayevskaya's contributions, one wonders why, given the caliber of News and Letters Committees members, the problem of a philosophic nucleus persists.

David M.
San Francisco



U.S. LABOR BATTLES CAPITAL

I liked what I heard an auto worker in Flint say after the NAFTA agreement was passed. He said American unions should reach out to the Mexican workers and that we should organize a "labor union of North America." He also said it's a sad state of affairs when somebody like Ross Perot could be taken as a spokesman for the working people. It sure is.

Unemployed worker
Chicago

* * *

I've just recently become unemployed and some of the things I've read in Chapter I of Marx's Capital have come alive for me. Capital is the death of itself because it takes out the human being—even in something like applying for unemployment. Now an automatic telephone answers and dictates questions and even determines how and when you answer them!

Learning fast
New York

* * *

Today capitalists themselves know that they can't afford to pay managers to just structure production while an

army of workers does only "what they are told." They want the workers to "own" the "process." The new management style says it wants to "empower" workers to make use of their heads as well as their hands. This "empowerment," like earlier changes in the production process, is driven by capitalism's need to extract more labor from workers. Workers are empowered only to more perfectly personify capitalism. The new management style is aimed at convincing people that there is no alternative to capitalism's irrationality.

Skeptical
Chicago

* * *

Please let all your readers know that before they buy their next bag of Domino, GW or Redpath sugar, they should remember that the British conglomerate, Tate & Lyle (T&L), owns those sugar companies and is an international enemy of labor and the environment. Its production sites are dirty and dangerous for workers and the community alike. At the A.E. Staley Manufacturing plant in Decatur, a T&L subsidiary, T&L is trying to break our union. It is fighting our very right to exist. It's why we are calling for an international boycott of all T&L products. Ask your readers to help us spread the word.

Staley workers, AIW Local 837
Decatur, Ill.

* * *

I sold copies of N&L at the labor rallies for Alta Bates Hospital workers on the basis of the stories from miners, Staley, and B.A. Lastelle's column. People really do want to know what's going on in others' struggles.

Jim M.
Berkeley, Cal.

OUR READERS RESPOND

The choice of material in your paper is always thought-provoking. You obviously believe in work among the working class and the masses, yet are not oblivious to the importance that scholarship can bring to a revolutionary struggle. This is evident in your December 1993 paper. The article on bell hooks and the

Marx conference in Chicago are indicative of your awareness of this as an important forum for debate and discourse. Also, our views on Yeltsin converge completely; very few people are thinking the Russian situation through.

D.A.
North Carolina

* * *

As 1994 begins the workers and poor people calling themselves the Zapatista National Liberation Front have started an insurrection against the status quo in Mexico. How will the Mexican elite react? I know N&L from its page two coverage of women's struggles to its last page of international events will tell me where the struggle is at. Please renew my sub for two more years.

Longtime reader
Reseda, Cal.

* * *

As a Latvian American, I follow closely events in the Baltic countries as well as in Russia and Eastern Europe. I am particularly impressed with your concern about the question you call "what happens after." Freedom is a very complicated concept.

Graduate Student
Virginia

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We have been receiving N&L and our students have benefited from it. Our periodicals budget is now zero minus—that is, far from getting new ones, we are being forced to cancel subscriptions. To support alternative views we would be very grateful if you could provide us with a complimentary sub. It is a sad era when the State of California must beg for dissenting journals but we have arrived at that time. Please help us, if you can.

Cal State University Library
Sacramento

Editor's note: We established some time ago a "donors fund" out of which we are able to send paid gift subs to libraries, prisoners, international readers who cannot send funds and others who want—but otherwise could not pay for—a sub. Can you make a contribution to help us expand our readership this way?

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Editorial

In early January, a remark by Bill Clinton about Haiti was greeted by shouts of glee and laughter from that country's military-gangster-capitalist rulers. When asked about exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's future, Clinton said: "I think his own prospects are clouded." His seemingly offhand but very calculated words suggested that the U.S. has given up even the pretense of helping to bring Aristide back. Aristide, a leftist proponent of liberation theology elected on a platform of radical social and economic change, was overthrown by the military in 1991 after less than a year in office.

With his statement, Clinton returned to the old Bush policy: 1) on and off again economic sanctions, enough to wound but not to topple the military; 2) pressure on Aristide to form a coalition government with these assassins and oppressors; 3) refusal to give Haitian boat people political asylum while granting it to Cuban boat people. Clinton, elected on promises of reversing these policies, had backtracked on the asylum issue even before taking office. Clinton, a liberal who readily compromises with the most reactionary forces in the U.S., wants Aristide to do the same with the out-and-out fascist types from the Haitian military.

Last fall, in the middle of heightened economic sanctions and even the dispatch of some U.S. military observers to Haiti, Clinton immediately retreated after military-organized thugs made some threatening gestures in the Port-au-Prince harbor. During those same weeks, the CIA leaked to the media a report branding Aristide as "mentally unstable."

The New York Times soon revealed that the very source of this "data" was the Haitian military, probably including even the present ruler, Raoul Cédras. It seemed that Cédras and other top officers were members of SIN, a shadowy Haitian intelligence service created in 1986 by the CIA. During the late 1980s, SIN received up to \$1 million per year from the CIA at a time when Congress had voted to cut off all aid to the Haitian military. Instead of fighting drugs, its stated purpose according to the CIA, SIN officers persecuted, tortured, and killed Aristide supporters and other leftists.

So what did Clinton do after the CIA's slander of Aristide and the revelations about SIN? He certainly didn't fire anyone at the CIA. Instead, he moved closer to their position once the slander got picked up by powerful reactionary politicians such as Bob Dole. Clinton began hinting that Aristide's businessman prime minister, Robert Malval, appointed under U.S. pressure to appease the military, would make a better leader than Aristide. As a Haitian politician told the New York Times (12/20/93): "His invitations and meetings around Washington had every appearance of a coup d'état in the making." That having failed, the plan now seems to be to so wear down Aristide and his supporters that they are willing to accept some type of figleaf of democracy while the military and its henchmen remain in power.

That is why Aristide, not the military, comes in nowadays for the most criticism from Washington. That is why there was dead silence on January 15 when yet another Clinton deadline for restoring Aristide to power

Clinton, C.I.A. bolster military tyranny in Haiti

passed by. That is why there was also silence when two weeks earlier neo-Duvalierist gangs burned down hundreds of homes in the sprawling Port-au-Prince slum Cite Soleil (Sun City). The military-backed terrorists act-

Women's conference

(continued from page 2)

history and fiction meet."

Another workshop discussed a new anthology, *Theorizing Black Feminisms*, involving women who created it. They wanted to emphasize the collection's roots in the 1970 anthology, *The Black Woman*, edited by Toni Cade Bambara. Beverly Guy-Sheftall said that "African-American women have been the most visionary in feminist theory. It is not an alien discourse to us." Evelyn Barbee, a nurse anthropologist, stated, "We need more empirical data on Black women because most studies on women are about white women.... There is a need to talk about domestic violence against Black women and to discuss this with young men."

Black lesbian feminists conducted a workshop the last day of the conference. Marva Nelson stated that Black lesbians in academia are rendered invisible, while others discussed the need to include Black lesbian writers' works in the Black studies curriculum, feminist studies, and discussions in the community.

"Black Women Historical Figures and Interpretation" revealed how Black women's narratives become misinterpreted. Nell Painter spoke about her forthcoming *Sojourner Truth: A Life and A Symbol*. She discovered that the words attributed to Truth and most quoted by feminists, "Ain't I a woman," were invented by the white woman abolitionist, Frances Dana Gage, who edited the narrative Truth had carefully dictated so her ideas could find a wider audience.

While the L.A. Rebellion was only discussed in one workshop, the main debate was over the conference's resolution to Clinton. Women demanded issues be included from welfare rights to criticism of Black woman Senator Carol Moseley-Braun's support of the crime bill, to Clinton's health care plan, to issues of justice, public education, domestic violence, and lesbian and gay rights.

Finally, in her keynote speech, Angela Davis conveyed the impression that she had the answers to the contradictions that appeared at the conference. She got standing ovations. The contradictions she ignored, however, were those that have characterized the history of her own political life, especially in the wake of the collapse of Communism. Instead, she spoke of the need to support Cuba, without mentioning what happened after the Cuban revolution, especially regarding the conditions of women today. Although she still identifies herself as a socialist, what I want to know is, what kind of socialism is needed for total freedom?

What was exciting was that we were able to meet, during those three days, almost every Black woman writer we have ever read. The question we went away with was: could this conference be a new beginning?

ed after one of their leaders got the fate he deserved from the local population. The Duvalierists are demanding that the residents of Cite Soleil, a bastion of Aristide support, change the name of their community back to Cite Simone, the name forced on it during the Duvalier days (Simone was Francois Duvalier's wife).

The Haitian masses have long had a clearer view of what Washington is doing than that usually presented in the U.S. media. As a 26-year-old resident of a fishing village asked the New York Times: "Why hasn't Washington ever wanted a full embargo here? They keep doing just enough to crush the people while the army just keeps getting richer." A business man in the capital added: "You get the feeling that the United States is mocking us. Their will has been the law in this region for as long as anyone can remember, and yet they pretend to be powerless here. You have to ask yourself, 'Do they really want Aristide to come back?'"

So far, Aristide has refused to accept a rotten Clinton-type compromise, but he has also spared Clinton any direct public criticism. At a January 15 Miami gathering of Haitian leaders convened by Aristide and to which under U.S. pressure even members of the military were invited (they didn't show), those present voted to hold firm. They even hinted they might be ready to attack Clinton when they voted to abrogate Haiti's treaty with the U.S. allowing immediate repatriation of boat people, a resolution which prompted an angry walkout by the State Department representative.

Is it not time for those leaders fighting for Haitian liberation to have less dialogue with the Clinton administration and more with the Black American masses and other forces of liberation right within this country? More importantly, isn't it time for those in the U.S. who support Haitian liberation to find more forceful and creative ways of expressing that support?

Black World

(continued from page 1)

ciation) in Jamaica. By 1915 Garvey had immigrated to the U.S. and set about building the largest mass movement of people of African descent in modern history. At its pinnacle, 1919 to 1924, Lenin and the Bolshevik Party recognized in the organizational expanse of the Garvey movement a Black revolutionary nationalism that U.S. and British imperialism had to contend with.

For the Black revolutionary poet Claude McKay, it was precisely this international context of Black upheavals and the Russian Revolution which allowed him to put Garveyism into revolutionary perspective. Nothing did that more profoundly than his trip to Russia in 1922 to speak before the 4th Comintern Congress on the "Negro question" in America. In response to Lenin's appeal for studies on this question at this and the 2nd Congress, McKay wrote *The Negroes in America*, a study not discovered until 1977 in its original Russian edition.

By 1925, however, a year after Lenin's death, and only two years after his departure from Russia, McKay was one of the first to sound the alarm against the new barbarism on the horizon—Stalinism. In an anti-Stalin poem, "We Who Revolt," dedicated to Max Eastman, whom he had renewed acquaintances with in France in 1925 as Eastman was en route from Russia to New York with a copy of Lenin's "Will," McKay wrote:

*We shall see prancing tyrants in the place
Of shattered kings, an unctuous renegade
Planting his foot on a broken mace,
Posing a smith's hammer, a peasant's spade!
And we shall see the thoughts we loved so well
Twisted and torn and mangled into shapes
More hideous than the fancied forms of hell,
To strengthen the old tyranny of new-crowned apes.*

McKay's 1925 prescience coincided with the unctuous appearance of the now-hegemonic myth of the "Russian Lenin-Stalin way of putting the national question" that was propounded for the first time at the 5th Comintern Congress less than 6 months after Lenin's death.² Not only had Lenin criticized any notion of a so-called "Russian way," but his last ideological struggle was against Stalin's Great Russian chauvinism toward national minorities within the new Soviet Republics.

Speaking to that same 1924 Congress, Lovett Fort-Whiteman argued in the same vein McKay had two years earlier: "The ideas of Marx have spread only slowly among the Negroes, because the Socialists and even the Communists have not realized that the problem must be dealt with in a specialized way. The same newspapers do not satisfy the needs of the Negro worker which suit the needs of the white. The same speeches, propaganda, literature, will not suffice. The Negro feels no antagonism to Communism, but wants to know where it will satisfy his peculiar needs.... The Negroes are destined to be the most revolutionary class in America, but Communist propaganda among the Negroes is hampered by the lack of publicity carrying a special appeal."³

The dialectical fusing of Black and Red has proven more, not less, difficult to excavate with the collapse of Communism. But surely if we are to comprehend what makes this dialectic the vision of the future and not a truncated past, we will have to begin where Lenin left off, namely, fighting the narrow nationalism of our age's "unctuous renegades."

2. 5th Congress of the Communist International. *Abridged Report*, (London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1924), p. 187.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 200-01.

Black/Red View

by John Alan

The country is now going through an ideological panic over a crime wave created by politicians who want to show that they're better crime fighters than their opponents. The Senate has passed a crime bill making five more crimes punishable by death and has approved the hiring of 100,000 policemen and the building of new prisons without any serious opposition. Mario Cuomo, the liberal governor of New York, and Pete Wilson, the ultra-conservative governor of California, have called special sessions of their legislatures to consider new laws to combat crime. Jesse Jackson, with the help of the African-American political leadership, held a summit conference in Washington D.C. to organize a crusade to make African Americans confront the "internal causes" of crime in the Black communities.

While it may be obvious that there is no sudden jump in the magnitude of crime, there is widespread support among the white middle class for more prisons and longer sentences for convicted felons. As one California assemblyman put it: "write crime across a bill and it will become law."

Andrew Hacker, the white sociologist, tells us in his book *Two Nations* that when white America thinks about violent crime they think about "Black crime" and not white felons. He goes on to say Black crime "...crops up in every poll, and has become a conversational staple. Still, most white Americans do not live in or near areas where violence stalks the streets... nor does a significant share of taxes paid by white households support black families on welfare or out-of-wedlock children."

He reveals that the average Black criminal standard of living does not exceed that of the unemployed or underemployed law-abiding Black worker in the inner cities, but he says nothing serious about the interrelationship of crime, poverty, and capitalism.

Last fall Clinton gave a pious speech in Memphis about Black crime and the general amorality of Black youth. That speech has taken on a definitive, concrete, political meaning over the last few months. It is now clear that Clinton used it to set into place his national agenda to build more prisons and give the judiciary and the police greater power to quell social unrest, as his administration pursues a policy of turning the welfare sys-

Panic over 'crime'

tem into a severe form of humiliation and punishment for poor people.

A political casualty of the president's speech was the Black leadership. Few of these Black leaders have had the moral courage to counter Clinton's clap-trap by telling about the more than two decades of poverty and permanent unemployment that ravaged and dehumanized life in the inner cities by economic forces beyond the control of African Americans. Instead we find that those at Jackson's summit believe they can regenerate the morals of the Black community by having the churches take over the raising of 100,000 Black youth. This proposal is a capitulation to Clinton's concept of the necessity to carry on an internal moral crusade to end the social crisis in the Black community.

However, both Clinton and Jackson understand that there has to be some kind of an objective movement toward resolving the crisis. Jackson apparently believes that can be done politically through the congressional Black Caucus. Clinton believes it can be done economically by the establishment of "empowerment zones," that is, giving tax breaks to businesses that move to the Black community, a form of trickle-down economy.

Both of these concepts avoid the self-emancipatory activity of African-American masses. This kind of elitism is a major, ongoing, historic problem of the Afro-American freedom struggles. This problem arose passionately at Jackson's summit meeting during the dispute over rap. The Black middle class, like the white middle class, is disturbed by the vulgarity, violence, and negative content of rap. But rap is not an abstract nothing: it speaks about the brutal reality and dehumanization of life in the Black ghettos of this country. In its own way, rap puts American civilization on trial because it implies that there is an alternative to this brutality.

There is a present danger that the historic social evils of capitalism, crime, and poverty, which baffled the empirical thinking of the classical political economists, sending them to find the roots of crime and poverty in the amorality of the British working class, is now being turned into a thinly disguised form of American racism which links together Black crime, welfare, and illegal aliens as causes of the present recession. This we must expose and vigorously oppose.

For Black History Month: a rare essay by Richard Wright

Editor's note: In commemoration of Black History Month, we are proud to make available—for the first time in over 50 years—a brief but insightful essay penned by Richard Wright. Wright, a towering figure in American literature, had published his masterpiece, *Native Son*, in 1940, and returned to Chicago in 1941 to research his history of Black Americans, *12 Million Black Voices*. Much of that research was conducted at Parkway Community House, an innovative center located in Chicago's south side "Black Belt." The director of Parkway, Horace Cayton, was then at work on the massive sociological study, *Black Metropolis*, which he co-authored with St. Clair Drake.

The article printed here was written by Wright in April 1941 at Cayton's request; it was not published until 1943, when it appeared as a Parkway Community House brochure, entitled "The Negro and Parkway Community House." It has never been re-published until now.

At the time the essay was written, Wright was an increasingly disaffected member of the Communist Party (CP), and was engaged in discussions on the Party's relationship to Black Americans with Cayton, a fierce critic of CP policies. Wright's break with the CP, and his militant writings on American racism, drew the attention of Raya Dunayevskaya. "There is stirring in the Negro people in the U.S. today," she wrote, "a racial consciousness which has at present found its most extreme expression in the writings of Richard Wright." ("Negro Intellectuals in Dilemma," 1944)

The text of the essay printed here follows that of the Parkway Community House brochure as held in the Horace R. Cayton Papers, Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature, Chicago Public Library.

Richard Wright was a guest at Parkway Community House two years ago, just a few months after the House had opened its doors. Mr. Wright was here at that time to gather material for his book, *12 Million Black Voices*. Many of the things that he saw at the House became part of that book. Mr. Wright summed up what he saw in the city and at the House in this statement. It is with great pride that Parkway Community House publishes this statement by such an eminent and eloquent writer.

Horace R. Cayton Director
Parkway Community House, 5120 S. Parkway, Chicago

A great drama is transpiring in the tenements, on the pavements, and in the factories and shops of our industrial American cities, a drama of such violence, poignancy and magnitude, a drama involving the lives and destinies of so many millions, that it is incredible that so few people know of its existence and comprehend its fateful meaning.

The action of this drama is draped in the simple guise of every-day life, but the ultimate meaning of its action affects the lives of every person living within the boundaries of the continental United States. Curiously, there are no spectators witnessing this drama; there is no audience to condone or condemn it. Every American citizen is an active participant and helps to shape this drama toward the climax of hope or tragedy.

Though you may not realize it, you know the familiar externals of this drama. You see it every day; but its real heart and essence have been hidden from you. The human actors upon this industrial stage have not been introduced to you as human beings, but rather as mamies and clowns. In the past your stereotyped reaction to these actors have been either laughter or tears. Our newspapers, magazines, textbooks, churches, schools, advertisements, and radios have participated in an elaborately formed conspiracy to hide the real and painful truth of men struggling against great odds.

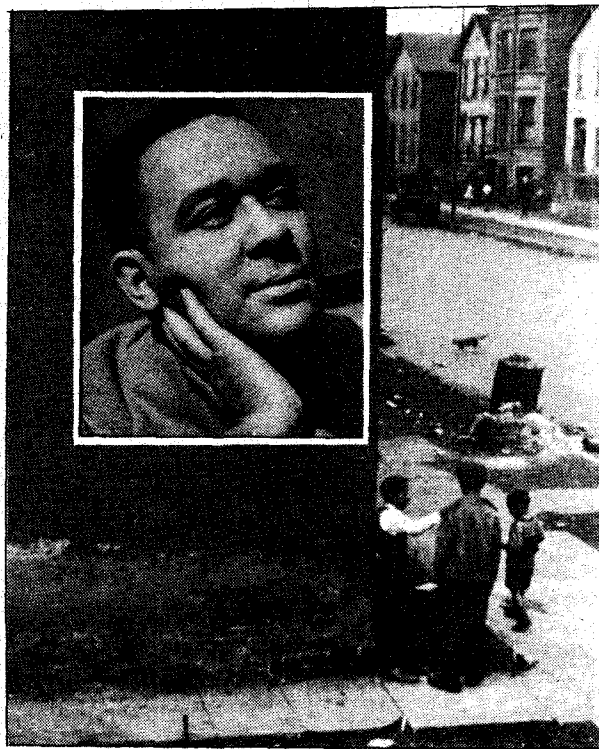
The protagonist of this drama is the migrant plantation Negro who came North, and the obstacle against which he pitted his strength is the total configuration of urban life. These Negroes are truly a form of the modern refugee who has become so numerous a spectacle in our world today; they are refugees from a Southern folk culture, from a static, warm, organic, simple way of life, where every man knew his fellow man; they are refugees fleeing the terrors of the plantation and seeking desperately to gain a footing in our highly complex and impersonal cities.

The story of the migrant Negroes' attempt at adjustment in the North is not a new story. It is but a phase of a story that is as old as man and man's effort to build civilization. It began with the first primitive peasant who fled the storms, the floods, the famines and tribulations of the hinterland, and walked trembling and afraid through the crooked streets of ancient cities. The bewildered, baffled faces of the migrant Negro in the Northern city is but a poignant note in a theme whose variations began long before history and whose pathetic chords will resound as long as the desperate folk of the farms are forced to seek refuge in the noisy cities.

Why, then, one might ask, if this story is old, if it is already so well known, should the question of the Negro migrants' adjustment be called to our special attention here and now? The answer is manifold: First, though the story of the trek of the peasant to the city is an old one, the Negro has been doomed to live and act his part in this story with a profound difference and under conditions most difficult. Second, whereas with other peoples the process of urban adjustment is long and drawn out, with the Negro it is concise, compact, volatile, brutal and compressed within a historical space of time readily accessible, partly through memory and reading. Third, strangely, the Negroes' story in our Northern cities, in an inverse sense, constitutes a highly enlarged reflection

of all attempts at urban adjustment, and therefore lends itself to fruitful study and examination.

HAD THE NEGRO migrant been allowed to participate fully and organically in what we so proudly term the "American Way of Life," the Negroes' role in this



Richard Wright (inset) and Chicago in the 1940s.

drama of the peasant in the city would have had no special significance. Like the Czech, the Lett, the Pole, the Finn, the Scot, the Dutch, the Welch, the Italian and many others who came to our shores, the migrant Negro would have landed in the midst of our cities with a feeling of being at home, would have learned our ways, would have obtained employment wherever jobs were open and would have advanced upward according to his ability. He would have sent his children to our schools and would have lived to see those children lift themselves gradually from the slums to the rooming house area, and finally to the spacious middle class suburbs of our American cities.

But the migrant Negro was not allowed to participate

Voices raised in support of Chiapas insurrection

Los Angeles—Over 500 loud and lively Mexicano and Chicano demonstrators filled the sidewalk opposite the Mexican consulate on Friday, Jan. 7, gathered to express solidarity with the uprising of the indigenous people of Chiapas, and to protest the Mexican government's brutal response-by-massacre.

All generations were present, from grandmothers to toddlers. In addition, a new generation of "Chicano and proud" youth, from MECHA chapters on various area campuses, participated in the chants: "Aquí, Alla, El pueblo vencerá" ("Here, there, the people will win"); "Abajo el asesino Salinas" ("Down with Salinas the assassin"); "Que viva Zapata" and "Viva la libertad!"

"The people were hungry and fighting for their rights," one man, a Mexican worker, told *News & Letters*. "If I had been there, I would have joined them. And the people who were killed there—that could have been us."

That internationalist perspective expressed itself again the following Thursday, Jan. 13, at a meeting on the Chiapas uprising sponsored by the United Garment Workers Committee, an independent grouping of Latino workers who are attempting to organize in the highly exploitative garment industry.

A member of the Frente Mixteco-Zapoteco Binacional presented the historic and current situation in Chiapas, followed by discussion. "What does it mean when in Chiapas they raise a slogan of wanting democracy?" one woman asked. "The U.S. is supposedly the greatest democracy in the world, but we know what it's like—there's unemployment, there's racism, there's exploitation of workers. What people call 'democracy' is not the answer."

"I think they're talking about the need for a very different kind of democracy, a genuine democracy," one person responded to her.

"The best way we can support what is happening in Chiapas," a founder of the United Garment Workers Committee concluded, "is to be strong in the organizing work we do here."

—Michelle Landau

Salinas rule opposed

Mexico City—The rebellion in Chiapas has taken place in the context of a six-year administration, that of Carlos Salinas de Gortari, which we all knew to be fraudulent from the start. None of the erudite commentaries have pointed out the simple fact that the insurgents have been organizing themselves for this revolt roughly since the beginning of Salinas' term. The signing of the Free Trade Agreement was the moment at which they decided the time had come to move.

Some of the developments since Jan. 1 show that Mexico is a different place since 1988. In 1988 the opposition

in this process, and today, the so-called Black Belt areas of our Northern industrial cities like Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburgh and St. Louis constitute the black, undissolved lumps and clods in the quickening, life-giving fluid we call democracy.

Locked by tradition into restricted city areas, curtailed in his right to participate in industry and the professions, victimized in a racketeering housing situation, the migrant Negro and his children have, in some few instances, succeeded admirably, but in all too many other instances they have failed.

He failed because the odds against him were overwhelming and his folk mental equipment proved more of a detriment than a blessing. The expression of his failure is something that every American must be able to realize and interpret when he sees it. Here are some of the tell-tale social scars that betray the inescapable tragedy of the Negro in our industrial cities: Residential segregation; in some instances, 70,000 or more persons living to a square mile; the doubling up of families; the all-pervading habit of taking in lodgers and roomers to help pay exorbitant rentals, four or five persons living in one room; juvenile delinquency; family disorganization; adult crime; high adult death rates; high infant mortality rates; and the prevalence of diseases—tuberculosis, syphilis and insanity.... To make a long story short, in most Northern cities, like Chicago, for example, the Negro, because of adverse conditions, is failing to reproduce himself, is dying out, and if it were not for the constant additions to the population caused by immigration, he would truly die out in the course of years.

WITH THESE FACTS before our eyes and with this background drawn, the sensitive and alert members of the community can see at once the necessity for a more intensive and concentrated type of social service, administered by fearless and trained brains, equipped with a knowledge of society derived from empirical research.

Philanthropy cannot solve this problem. The money and time spent studying or seeking to control it is, in fact, but the first step toward comprehending a task whose magnitude but few realize and whose ultimate solution is destined to be historical.

The Parkway Community House is the first institution equipped with scientific knowledge of the urban situation among Negroes to attempt to control, probe, and disseminate facts as to the processes, meanings, causes and effects of urbanization. Its policies and activities should merit your most urgent attention and support.

Chicago, April 1941

—Richard Wright

was mainly focused in the cities, especially Mexico City, and did not spread to the campo. Today the situation is reversed; it began with the campesinos, and the support has spread throughout the country. Several marches of over 10,000 have taken place in Mexico City.

In 1988 Salinas made it clear that he would not budge an inch; in fact we thought at the time that he was becoming quite the fascist in response to the mass protests. Today he is clearly being forced to come up with a different response. People know about his offering of amnesty (ridiculous as it is in most respects) and his shakeup of his administration. People may not know that the government of Chiapas created a "confidential report" (obviously "leaked" by the federal government) called a "Political Diagnosis of the Conflict Zone" in which they admit Chiapas is living "the most dramatic situation of poverty in its entire history." It proposes a ten-point program to fix things up, including canceling the debt campesinos have with the state and "modifying the institutional relations of all governmental dependencies with the campesinos, creating a climate of respect for human dignity...." It appears that there may be something besides the use of brute force on the table, and at the same time we have to worry about the government convincing the people that it has our best interests in mind.

—School teacher and political activist

Stirrings preceded uprising

Yajalon, Chiapas, Mexico—After years of poverty, a good segment of the indigenous population has decided they have nothing left to lose. Most of the poor in the region haven't had access to any kind of education or health care.

Justice through peaceful demonstrations throughout the years (to call attention to their needs and their dues) have been virtually ignored. In 1992 the notoriety of the Columbus protests around the world perhaps in part encouraged participation in marches for land reform and other peaceful demonstrations. There were also land takeovers which were quickly repressed.

Last year thousands marched throughout the diocese on many occasions for land reform and for the release of the priest Joel Padron, jailed ostensibly for stealing three chickens. In fact, he lived in a very politically active town and was seen as an agitator, apparently by people like the then-governor Patrocinio Gonzalez Garrido.

There seems to be an overall support for the rebels' reasons, if not for all their tactics. There are apparently quite a few women among them.

A month before the rebel activity, Nestle workers went on strike. I don't believe there are any direct connections between the strikers and the rebels, but they are clearly responding to the same problems.

—Liberation theologian

Decaying state of the nation

(continued from page 1)

doing on these things here at home?"

It was not the first time he had invoked and twisted Dr. King's name to his purposes. In November in Memphis he had asserted that if King were alive he would be dismayed most at the "Black on Black violence" today. Although a number of Black leaders like Jesse Jackson have been pushing that same line, Clinton's hypocrisy was immediately exposed by the Black community. Roger Wilkins—the most moderate of civil rights activists and now history professor at George Mason University—issued this sharp critique: "It's despicable for the President not to offer a jobs program when he offers all this gratuitous advice on our behavior." Even such a conservative as Clarence Page blasted the "efforts to politically sanitize King's memory," pointing out that "King called for a guaranteed income for all Americans. Clinton's crime bill offers poor youths prison 'boot camps.'"

While Clinton attempted to defend his record against such attacks, having five Black cabinet members is hardly the kind of jobs program Black America had in mind—and, at Howard, Clinton acknowledged there is still much to be done. All he offered was the so-called "empowerment zones" giving tax breaks to businesses that Congress approved last year.

Although a genuine "jobs program" remains Clinton's key unfulfilled promise, it is not all that Black America is demanding in its continuous struggles against the deeply embedded racism of this land. As 1994 began, those struggles have already included everything from a threatened basketball boycott by the Black Coaches Association over a history of racist treatment—averted only when the Justice Department prepared to intervene—to the outpouring of over 2,000 "Black Women in the Academy" for a conference at MIT, who demanded a Kerner Commission-like report on their grievances. (See Diane Lee's report in "Woman as Reason," p. 2.)

Essay Article

(continued from page 5)

tion creates political space for a neo-fascist like Zhirinovskiy—or some other contender who tries to use the rallying cry of Russian nationalism in order to gather state power into a single hand.

In a word, what defines the context of Zhirinovskiy's ascent is not just the general economic crisis, but the specific form it has assumed at this degenerate stage of state-capitalism: the coexistence of "free market" restructuring with the drive to strengthen the "iron hand" of state power at a moment when the latter is facing great fragmentation and chaos.

The crucial thing to watch is how the rise of such retrogressive tendencies affects Moscow's relations with the 21 ethnic republics contained in the Russian federation. When he ran for president in 1991, Zhirinovskiy was alone in calling for the abolition of these ethnic republics. This is now being openly advocated by some of Yeltsin's spokesmen.⁷

This effort to unify the Russian state through recourse to the narrowest type of "great Russian chauvinism" has ominous implications. As Mihajlo Mihajlov recently wrote, "It is the best recipe for a civil war" which could be "ten times larger than in the former Yugoslavia—and a hundred times more dangerous because of nuclear weapons. We may need to avert a World War III."⁸

PHILOSOPHY AND REALITY

Russia's increasing turn toward greater authoritarianism and even neo-fascism has led some to compare the events there to the rise of Hitler in the 1930s. Such comparisons can of course be quite superficial; after all, the river of history is never crossed the same way twice. Yet a striking parallel between Germany in the 1930s and Russia today does exist in at least one respect: in both cases the turn to the Right flows from an impasse reached by the radical Left.

Hitler's rise to power resulted not just from an economic crisis, but also from the defeat of the German Revolution of 1923. The seeds of this defeat were planted with the murders of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht in 1919; they were killed by the forerunners of the Nazis, the Freikorps, after leaders of the German Social Democracy called for their deaths. By the 1930s, an even deadlier form of counter-revolution from within revolution emerged with the rise of Stalin, whose disastrous policies enabled Hitler to come to power.

Today's rise of neo-fascism on a world scale likewise flows from a defeat of the Left, one which arose fully from within the revolutionary movement. Its roots go back to the whole post-World War II era and reached a kind of closure in the 1980s, when in Grenada in 1983 a counter-revolution from within destroyed that revolution, giving Reagan an excuse to launch his imperialist invasion.

Far from just being a question of Grenada, it showed that the revolutionaries of our era had failed to address the question "what happens after" the revolution before the seizure of power in a way that would provide direction for the new stage of mass revolts. By the time the bankruptcy of all existing models of "socialism" became evident in the 1980s, this failure to articulate how revo-

JOBS, JOBS, JOBS

Black unemployment, though it has generally been double white unemployment, now exceeds even that ratio—but a genuine "jobs program" is far from the need of Black America alone. Nonetheless, we were told in Clinton's "State of the Union" address on Jan. 25 that the American economy is "recovering," with inflation last year at the lowest rate in seven years, the Consumer Price Index rising two-tenths of a percent in December for an annual rate of 2.7% and some primarily smaller factories around the country even posting a few "Help Wanted" signs that had not been seen for many years. At just about the same time that these facts were reported, however, GTE, the largest local phone company, announced that it will be "cost cutting" 17,000 more jobs to keep up with high-tech changes.

Thus, while the layoffs may be ebbing, they are far from ending; some of the nation's largest employers—IBM, Xerox, GE, Eastman Kodak, GM, McDonnell Douglas, Boeing and scores of others—are continuing to cut their payrolls. Job creation lags far behind jobs lost (no less than 230,000 last year), with 60% of the new jobs created last year only part-time and low-paid positions. In short, some 15 million workers remain unemployed or underemployed despite the talk of an economic recovery.

It is clear that the economic and social crisis today is not confined to Russia, but is endemic to the stage capitalist production has reached globally. The actual state this nation must confront is measured in the fact that:

- After remaining high but steady for more than 15 years, the number of Americans on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recently exploded from 10.8 million in 1989 to 14.2 million today, with one out of every seven children now on AFDC.

- The Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy at Tufts University reports hunger is no longer a question only of single mothers, the ghettos and the un-

Where is Russia going?

lution could lead to a truly liberating society led to a massive collapse of the Left. It has left a void in which renescent fascism can now thrive.

The events in Russia today are unfolding within this historic context. New forces of opposition have arisen there, from women's liberation groups to militant rank-and-file workers' committees, from groups of independent socialists to anarcho-syndicalists. Yet these forces are being tested by the reemergence of some very old tendencies.

One expression of this is that unlike in Eastern Europe—where the collapse of the "Communist" regimes led its various Communist Parties to drop the mantle of socialism and anoint themselves as "democrats"—in Russia the old Stalinists continue to claim adherence to "socialism" and "Marxism-Leninism." Only now, many of them are forging alliances with fascists like Zhirinovskiy! In this situation, to avoid the philosophic labor of articulating for our day a new banner of liberation opposed to both state-capitalism that called itself "Communism" and "free market" capitalism can lead only to total isolation from the masses.

The masses clearly have no quarter with the Communists; they did not support them during their battles with Yeltsin in October. Nor did they come into the streets to support Yeltsin. While some conclude from this that the masses are "passive," it rather reflects their lack of interest in the available political alternatives—which is more than can be said of many "independent leftists" who still harbor a hidden nostalgia for the Plan and nationalized property.⁹ It is at any rate easier to speak of the "passivity" of the masses than to fill the void in the projection of a comprehensive concept of liberation.

Most radicals never imagined that a philosophy of liberation was needed to assure a successful revolution, since they took for granted they already knew the meaning of socialism—i.e., that it is one or another form of nationalized property. Yet those who opposed "actually existing socialism" for being state-capitalist societies likewise paid little heed to the need to restate Marx's Marxism as a comprehensive philosophy of revolution, as if the projection of a liberating vision of the future could be left to spontaneous action. We are paying the price for this now in the rise of an array of retrogressive tendencies. But this is not an irreversible situation.

Now that Russia is so clearly headed in the direction of rightist reaction, many who yesterday said it was predestined to move from totalitarian "Communism" to "free market" democracy will tomorrow proclaim, in similar unilinear fashion, that it has no choice but to endure statist dictatorship. This will no doubt be attributed to everything from "the Russian character" to the legacy of "Oriental despotism."

However, as Marx long ago showed in arguing against those who tried to interpret his ideas along the lines of a unilinear evolutionism, "everything depends on the historic circumstance in which it finds itself." If what Marx called "the Russian intellect" concentrates the living forces of the country by entering into a serious philosophic reconsideration of what the totality of Marx's Marxism means for today, then a basis for the regeneration of Russia's revolutionary legacy can indeed be laid. It is no simple task, but it is one to which Marxist-Humanism can make a vital contribution.

Jan. 21, 1994

9. See the statements of the "Party of Labour" group, in International Viewpoint.

employed; the majority of the poor people in this country work. Nonetheless, the Clinton administration has just made sure the minimum wage will not go up this year, fearing that an increase would diminish his chances to have business support for his health care plan.

- The class and race divides that have always characterized U.S. society have steadily deepened with today's sharpened crisis. It is not accidental that hate crimes against immigrants and minorities have proliferated into the fastest-growing form of violence in the U.S. this year; nor that the Klan was emboldened to rally against Martin Luther King's birthday at the Illinois capitol building and other state capitals. Despite the subfreezing temperatures, hundreds came out for a counter-rally.

BEING HEARD

In the face of such sharp endemic contradictions, the Clinton administration has just announced a million-dollar plan for a series of New England-style "town meetings" to "bring us together"—beginning with a few "practice" forums in cities like Boston, Detroit and Houston without television cameras, before the nationally televised programs projected for next winter. The Harvard economist, John Kenneth Galbraith, believes that "it may persuade us that our differences are less serious than we imagine," and Sheldon Hackney, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, which is directing the project, believes that the project will "give people a sense that they have been heard."

Just as the totally different self-organized "town meetings" of the first American Revolution were transformed into the "engines of revolution," so today, when the idea people are struggling for is the idea of a society based on new, truly human relations, what is needed is not a question of "being heard" in order to persuade us our grievances are "not serious," but in order to work out how to uproot this degenerate, sexist, racist, exploitative society unseparated from creating a new one. That is why *News & Letters* was created as a forum for all the voices from below unseparated from a philosophy of revolution for our age. For the real state of this nation today is reflected not just in a litany of the crimes of capitalism but in the continuing myriad struggles in thought and in practice against it and for a different world.

It is seen in the Latino homesteaders in East New York, locked in a battle with the city officials who are trying to evict them from their homes—25 families who call themselves C.A.U.S.E. (Citizens Against Unjust and Senseless Evictions) and who wrested a promise from Giuliani's administration to negotiate selling them the buildings they have rehabilitated and live in, after they demonstrated at his inauguration.

It is seen in the hundreds of gay high school students and their friends who lobbied and demonstrated at the statehouse in Boston so forcefully that Massachusetts will this year become the first state in the nation to outlaw discrimination against gay and lesbian students in public schools.

It is surely seen in the way the great earthquake that Los Angeles has just suffered was not the only thing that has shaken that capitalist state—for it has been shaken even more profoundly, on the one hand, by the deep unemployment since the demise of the defense industries, and on the other, by the L.A. rebellion when the Black and Latino masses put American civilization on trial.

The state of this nation is seen, in short, in all the struggles of the rank-and-file workers, the women, the youth, the minorities that appear in every issue of *News & Letters*—and are kept inseparable from the theoretical explorations and analyses, as we attempt to tear down the barriers between workers and intellectuals, between theory and practice, between means and end as a revolutionary act.

It is in that sense that N&L does not merely "record" the "state of the nation" but can help to reshape it on new beginnings.

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7. For a discussion on recent developments in Yeltsin's government concerning the national minorities, see Vera Tolz, "Thorny Road toward Federalism in Russia" in *RFE/RL Research Report*, Dec. 3, 1993.

8. Mihajlo Mihajlov, "Zhirinovskiy's Crude Appeal," *Christian Science Monitor*, Dec. 21, 1993.

Youth

Institutionalized youth fight mind control

by Lynn Hailey

I was locked up for six months in a mental hospital in Utah, both for being gay and for being an activist. In psychiatric evaluations, they constantly referred to my delusional thinking being evident in the fact that I believed a revolution would change society! The fact that I did clinic defense and was associated with a Marxist organization was further used to "incriminate" me.

Thousands of youth are currently imprisoned in mental hospitals and Residential Treatment Centers (RTCs) across the country. These "behavior modification" programs are used to destroy our identity and remold us into stereotypical images of how people "should" conform and what we "should" believe.

Beatings, seclusion, restraints and shock treatment are common. Food, clothing and sleep are "privileges" granted only with compliance to unfair rules and completion of meaningless tasks to determine whether or not one is sane. Youth, unlike institutionalized adults, are deprived of many basic human rights. They are forced to undergo intrusive body strip searches, have their mail withheld, and are not allowed to write or make phone calls.

These facilities are housed in fortress-like buildings surrounded by barbed wire with numerous locked doors. Communication between inmates is restricted under the guise of preventing a conspiracy to break the rules or to escape. Inmates still find ways to resist these restrictions. In the hospital I was in, an inmate scrawled "Welcome to Auschwitz" above a door. One boy who was assigned to do gardening rearranged the rocks in the front of the building to read, "Escape while you still can!"

OBEDIENCE TRAINING

Youth are trained in RTCs to obey simply for the sake of obedience. Some programs resemble boot camp, with every moment and movement structured and scheduled. This is done to break down people's resistance to "treatment" which, of course, is only done to "help" them. Other programs have only observation where the youth are housed 20 hours a day in small, stark white rooms. Without being allowed to read, watch TV or communicate with other people, the days stretch endlessly ahead.

One 15-year-old woman said, "Every part of the hospital alienates me more and more from freedom or even the hope of being free. I try to suppress this feeling of being buried alive, however the clanging of each door leaves an indelible imprint on my mind."

Most of the youth who are imprisoned in these institutions have done very little to warrant such torture. Parents can have their child "voluntarily" hospitalized for reasons like arguing, doing poorly in school, having values the parents don't agree with, or for being politically active. No thought is given to whether or not the youth is in fact volunteering. And youth have practically no rights in contesting this treatment.

Cops defend KKK

Springfield, Ill.—As "the men in blue" surrounded/protected the Illinois Capitol building on Jan. 16, the Sunday before Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan stood safely on the steps of the Capitol. The 55 KKK members were demonstrating in an attempt to stop MLK Day from being a national holiday.

The Klan waved confederate flags in the air, wore black masks, held coats of arms which displayed their symbols, and periodically threw one hand up into the air in a Hitler-like fashion. All this was strangely, yet fittingly coordinated to the sounds of Wagner and a country version of "Dixie."

It was a cold, snowy day with sub-zero temperatures. Hundreds demonstrated against the Klan from Chicago, Champaign-Urbana, Springfield, Decatur, and surrounding areas.

Students ranging from the ages of 10-25 gathered from Loyola University, University of Illinois, and other schools. Local teachers had their elementary-level 10-12 year old students come to the rally and hold signs that said "No KKK."

Marchers held signs that said "Fight Racism" and "Unite and Fight." The majority marched with leftist groups in individual circles rather than a united one. Angry individuals unassociated with the leftist organizations were also present. Protesters chanted, "No Nazis, No KKK, No Fascism in U.S.A.!" and to the police, "Blue by day, White by Night!"

The police felt it was their duty to "keep the situation under control" and beat people protesting against the KKK to do so. They held cans of mace, wore protective visors, and "carried a big stick." With the public represented in all ages, types, and races of people, the state police reflected only the U.S. government, and supported, once again, the ruling class and the fascists.

As I was demonstrating, a man approached me and asked, "Where is the KKK?" I responded, "Just look around you; they're the men in blue and the people carrying the cameras!" The man looked at me and said, "You've got a lot of nerve talking like that. The police are here to protect you." I walked away and thought about him for quite some time. The police, as demonstrated by the day's rally and ones in the 1960s, obviously didn't support us; they were in defense of the KKK. There wasn't a line of police facing the KKK, ready to stop violent actions; the police were facing, pushing, and beating the public! And the media—they filmed us and interviewed the KKK!

—Vijay Jhansi

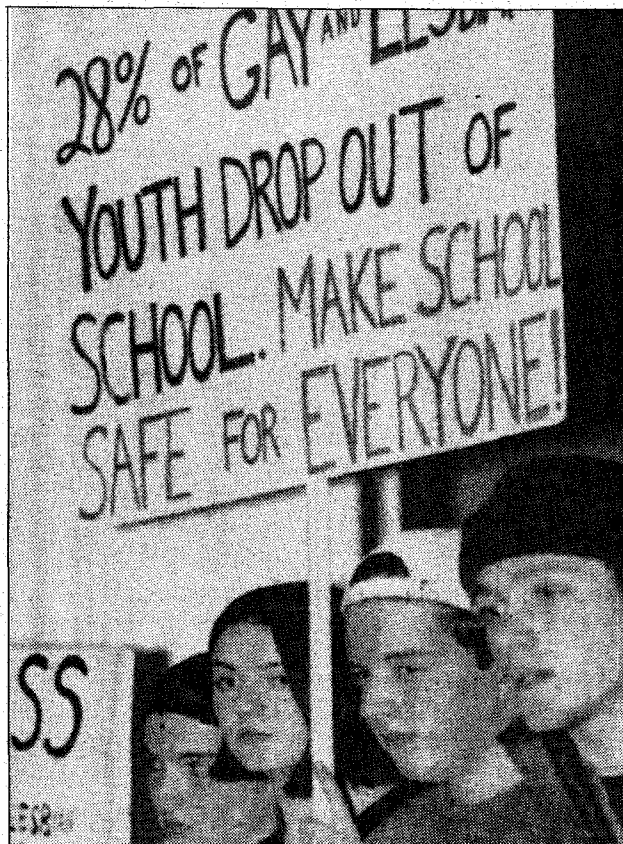
After I was kidnapped and taken to the hospital, I kept thinking, "They'll find out that this is all just a big mistake." But they kept telling me over and over again that I was emotionally disturbed.

LOCKED UP FOR MY IDEAS

I soon found out that it was my ideas they disagreed with. The first week I was there they forced me to read "Atlas Shrugged" to prove to me how good capitalism is. But it just showed me how much we really need a revolution. I was "encouraged" to wear skirts and makeup and to giggle and act dumb just to show me that I could act heterosexual!

Many youth, myself included, were incarcerated by the state government, which just illuminates how youth are treated as property in this society. Having custody of a child means you can do anything to them. The whole system is set up to defend the parents' "right" to send their child away. No thought is given to what the child actually needs or wants, even if it destroys who they are as a human being.

After my release I became active with a small group of youth called Students and Teens Opposing Psychiatric



The persistent lobbying and demonstrating of hundreds of gay, lesbian, and straight high school students forced the Massachusetts state legislature to pass the nation's first gay and lesbian anti-discrimination law that applies to public schools.

Abuse Network, which fights the psych system for locking kids up. We began publishing a magazine and our subscriptions grew to 6,000 in three months.

One young boy wrote in our magazine that "If I say that I am sick then I am trying to get attention, if I say that I am not then I am in denial. If I walk around the ward then I am pacing, if I sit down then I am withdrawn. If I do my homework well, then I am a perfectionist who is obsessive about details. If I don't do well, then I obviously don't care about education. And you know what, my doctor says, this hospital is good for me because it's consistent."

We need a society where youth are free to develop whichever way they choose. Where youth are not punished under the name of "help." And where freedom is something we all know.

Rebellion in Argentina

New York, N.Y.—This last Dec. 16, in the capital of one of the economically poorest provinces of Argentina, Santiago del Estero, government workers (who make up 80% of the province's labor force) took over the streets to protest both the reduction of their monthly salaries down 50%—from \$230 to \$115 and the fact that they had not been paid for three months. Provincial government officials and politicians have monthly salaries that go from \$3,500 to \$20,000. The presence of the police force to repress the demonstrators provoked a social upheaval that left 9 people dead, 120 injured and hundreds arrested.

The Governor's mansion, the Provincial Congress, the court houses, buses and cars, and the houses of "prominent" politicians were burned and destroyed by the masses. In one wall of the Governor's mansion the graffiti was very eloquent: "We had to burn this nest of rats." In other provinces, like President Menem's home province of La Rioja, daily demonstrations were held.

"People are starving!" the masses cried in Santiago. The same day of the upheaval, the President received a papal honor in the Vatican, and assured the Pope that in Argentina there is economic and political stability and that everybody agrees with his government's policies. Federal troops were sent to repress the workers protesting against those "miraculous" policies.

By Christmas, in the province of Buenos Aires and in the national capital, 14 prisons were taken over. Thousands of prisoners spend years in jail before being sentenced by a corrupt judicial power. Many of them are regularly tortured.

In a country of "political and economic miracles," the Catholic church is just beginning to wonder about social justice, and only a few voices of the Left, like the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo's Association (the mothers of the disappeared), are making themselves heard along with the masses. However, this upheaval is not a new phenomenon. In 1989, the preceding president, Raul Alfonsín, had to leave office before his term was over because of increasing mass discontent that ended in violent confrontations with federal troops (at the same time as the "caracazo" in Venezuela).

—Carlos Varela

Radiation experiments and today's nuclear agenda

Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary shocked the country Dec. 8 by announcing that over 800 human beings had been subjected to radioactive materials in numerous U.S.-sponsored experiments, starting in 1944. Although Congress had released a report on some of the tests in 1986, it was so little publicized that O'Leary herself seemed not have known of them.

The initial figure of 800 was quickly eclipsed by the tens of thousands of calls made or attempted to a special hotline for the victims. Appalling details of a few of the experiments have been oozing out:

- About 800 pregnant women were given radioactive iron at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., in the 1940s. Their children had an increased cancer rate.

- At Fernald State School in Waltham, Mass., 123 boys classified as "retarded" were told they were joining a science club; their parents were told they were being given a "special diet." They were not told it was radioactive milk.

- In the mid-1970s nearly 200 patients at various hospitals were placed in what one official called "virtually a sea of radiation" in a special room at the Oak Ridge, Tenn., nuclear weapons lab.

Immediately O'Leary began to reap the rewards for her disclosures, as the bourgeois pundits praised her "openness" to the skies. Few of them mentioned that the revelations came only a month after the Albuquerque Tribune published a series on the experiments.

Why expose past sins? To neutralize opposition to the present plans of the Department of Energy. As O'Leary herself explained: "The public, I hope, sees a past which is alarming and appalling. In the long run, if we handle this well, that might help us to establish a reason to be trusted.... We're pushing the national agenda forward and now I have this opportunity, maybe, of making some headway."

Clearly what has been preventing "headway" is public resistance to two crucial points on her agenda. First is the push to weaken toxic waste regulations, at least for the nuclear weapons production plants, which emit both nuclear waste and hazardous chemicals.

The second goal is to open new nuclear waste sites. Desperate to find a place to put the waste, O'Leary warned in April that the "solution to the storage may be

held captive by the people who oppose nuclear power."

YESTERDAY'S LIES, TODAY'S LIES

Already today's lies are embedded in the "truth"-telling about the past. The truth is that the experiments were conducted in the midst of a war against the Ban the Bomb movement. That war's casualties included both the scientific truth about the hazards of radiation and actual lives sacrificed to maintain rapid bomb production. Yet the nuclear establishment continues to claim that low levels of radiation are safe.

When evidence to the contrary began to come out in the early 1950s, the federal government trotted out pro-nuclear scientists to defend state-capitalism's arm's race by declaring that anyone who questioned the safety of such practices as open-air atomic bomb testing was hysterical or a Communist. Some dissident scientists were forced out of their jobs, like John Gofman and Arthur Tamplin of Lawrence Livermore Laboratory.

At the very same time the government was claiming that bomb test fallout was not dangerous, it was trying to fashion it into a weapon to poison "urban populations." For that purpose, from 1944 to 1961 it made 250 releases of radioactive materials into the air, to float onto civilian populations.

The whole nuclear complex is still a force to be reckoned with. It is still stonewalling the compensation claims of those who lived downwind from the bomb tests, of uranium miners, of atomic veterans, of nuclear weapons production workers, of the weapons plants' neighbors. The nuclear threat did not end with the Cold War, even if the emphasis is shifting from weapons production to waste "management." It is the manifestation of what science is in state-capitalist society.

—Franklin Dmitryev

1. "Disclosing Radiation Tests Puts Official in Limelight," New York Times, Jan. 6, 1994.

2. "Doctors of Death," New York Times, Jan. 13, 1994. In the same memo where he was asking for human guinea pigs for the development of these weapons, Dr. Joseph Hamilton casually admitted that the experiments had "a little of the Buchenwald touch," referring to the Nazis' lethal experimentation on human beings.

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

On Jan. 18, talks resumed in Geneva to divide Bosnia into three ethnic parts. There is little expectation of success because the Serb and Croat sides refuse to accede to Bosnian insistence on an improved territorial division.

Under these circumstances, and especially after the results of U.S. President Clinton's NATO summit meeting, the siege of Sarajevo and other cities will continue through the harsh winter. The resuscitated threat to use air strikes against Serb forces shelling Sarajevo and halting vital aid there, and to other cities, was dismissed by Serb leaders as a "storm in a tea cup." It is clear U.S. and European rulers agreed not to let intervention in Bosnia hinder consensus in other areas, mainly relations with Russia and East Europe.

International news has focused on Sarajevo after Serbian forces intensified their terrorist shelling barrage. But the Serbian military is continuing the genocidal campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Muslim population trapped in Srebrenica, Zepa and Gorazde as well. In Mostar, Croatian forces have resumed shelling after driving thousands of Bosnian Muslims into the eastern half of the city and blowing up the bridge which had united Mostar's people for centuries.

The war has produced ramifications within Serbia and Croatia as well. The Serbian economy is in shambles. President Milosevic, leader of Serbian aggression, blames the crisis entirely on Western sanctions in an effort to whip up further nationalist frenzy and deflect criticism away from his government. The average monthly wage is

Middle East peace accord

Despite efforts by Clinton to reopen Israeli-Syrian negotiations, the real key to the Middle East situation is how the September peace agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has been severely undermined in the four months since PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had their famous handshake in Washington on Sept. 13. Rabin has done nothing whatsoever to implement the accords. He has allowed the Dec. 13 deadline to turn over the Gaza strip and Jericho to PLO administration to slip by. He has allowed his soldiers to continue to hunt down and kill Palestinian leaders. He continues to hold 16,000 Arab political prisoners.

But the disillusionment of the Arab masses also lies at Arafat's door. Arafat has acted in an increasingly high-handed fashion, refusing to consult even his own fellow leaders, let alone the various tendencies in the Palestinian movement, all the while traveling the world and meeting with people like the Queen of England. Since August, Stalinist factions of the PLO and Islamic fundamentalists have united in a rejection front which has accused Arafat of selling out, with some of them going so far as to call for his assassination.

This type of opposition was to be expected, but in recent weeks, even formerly pro-Arafat groups in the territories as well as leading Palestinian writers and intellectuals have begun openly to criticize Arafat. They say he has been acting more like a Middle Eastern dictator such as Egypt's Hosni Mubarak than as the leader of a liberation movement with roots in the masses. They fear that he wants to exercise dictatorial control if he can ever get the Israelis to implement self-rule in Gaza and Jericho.

Rulers play politics while Bosnians die

now a meaningless \$2 and dropping, and many state workers are being paid partly with food.

Strikes by miners, railroad engineers and other workers have broken out. Milosevic expanded the national police last year, and recently responded to civil unrest with a media campaign stating the willingness of the Army to suppress any disturbances. On the political level, alternatives in recent elections in Serbia and Croatia emerged in a putrid collection of rabid nationalists, fascists, monarchists and criminals even further to the right of Milosevic and Tudjman.

Recent reports indicate some successes by the Bosnian Army. It isn't only military victories which have sustained the Bosnian people thus far, it is also the goal of a multiethnic society. Zlato Dizdarevic, a journalist for *Oslobodjenje* (Liberation), the only independent daily paper still publishing in Sarajevo, discussed the situation



India votes Left

Voters gave a stinging defeat to candidates from the Hindu chauvinist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian Peoples Party) in elections held in four Indian states. These were the very states in which the BJP had won in 1991. In one of them, Uttar Pradesh (population 140 million), the winning slate united the Socialist Party and the newly prominent Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP, Party of the Disinherited), the latter supported by lower-caste Hindus and Dalits (so-called Untouchables). Support also came from Muslims and tribal groups.

As against the 1991 elections or the riots of 1992-93, this time poor and low-caste Hindus repudiated the call of Hindu chauvinism, but did not return to the governing Congress Party either, which fared even worse than did the BJP. The latter seemed to draw many votes from upper-caste Hindus.

For now at least, India may have escaped the threat of a fundamentalist takeover, although it should be noted that the BJP did win a majority in the capital, New Delhi. Also experience has shown that—as in West Bengal with the Communists over the past decades, or more recently in Bihar with a similar slate to that which won in Uttar Pradesh—when the established Left comes to power, its reformist programs give a few government jobs to members of the oppressed groups, but do little to change the conditions of life and labor of the masses.

in a speech in the U.S. (Christian Science Monitor, Dec. 28, 1993):

Ironically the majority of Muslims in Bosnia are against Islamization. No one calls for a Muslim Bosnia except the international community in its plan to divide Bosnia. Amazingly only the Muslims of Bosnia are against that plan. What if the multiethnic state in Bosnia is destroyed? What does that mean for other multiethnic states in the world? What does that mean for the U.S., the world's biggest multiethnic state? Our problem is more than a moral problem for the U.S. It is a real political problem. The U.S. cannot accept fascism and racism in Europe and think it has no long-term effect in America....

The greatest threat to the aggressors outside Sarajevo is everyday normal life....This siege is a siege against normal life. Americans should realize that normal life in Sarajevo actually shows the happiness of living together. It means that a multiethnic and multireligious history is real. It means tolerance and love are possible. Normal life for us means that there is no chance for fascism and racism....

We ask: How is it possible for something like this to happen at the end of the century in the heart of Europe? How is it possible that all the basic principles of civilization...are proving to be a joke?...Maybe we are again at the beginning of a historical period where force is everything....If that is true, then in Sarajevo we want to be alone. Because we are not a part of that world. But if that is not true, I can tell you only one thing. Even if you don't care about me or about us, at least care about yourselves.

Genocide in Burundi

Since late October, the tiny Central African land of Burundi has been bathed in blood. The world media and political leaders avert their eyes as the Hutu majority (85% of the population), suffers massacre and oppression at the hands of the long-dominant Tutsi ethnic group (15% of the population). Last spring, Melchior Ndadaye, a Hutu, was elected president for the first time. He preached majority rule but also ethnic reconciliation, appointing a cabinet that was half Tutsi. But in October, the virtually all-Tutsi army killed the president.

The long-suppressed Hutu majority then rose up and began attacking Tutsis, including civilians. The army responded publicly by denying that its top officers had anything to do with the coup, and by inviting the surviving members of the government to come back. So far, the latter have not dared to do so, remaining holed up under heavy guard in a hotel in the capital.

Outside the capital, however, the army has been going through Hutu areas in an orgy of violence and death. In 1972, similar army massacres after a Hutu rebellion killed 150,000 Hutu, but today's death toll may be even higher. Then as now, the army has made educated Hutus a particular target.

An additional 800,000 people, also mainly Hutus, have fled to refugee camps in neighboring Rwanda and Tanzania. Deaths from disease are mounting in these camps. A promised force of 200 soldiers from the Organization of African Unity to serve as bodyguards for the remnants of the elected government did not arrive until late December. The events in Burundi have also raised tensions between ethnic groups in neighboring Rwanda and Zaire, apparently "inspiring" the Zairean dictator Mobutu Sese Seko to embark on his own version of "ethnic cleansing," forcing thousands to flee the country.

Bangladesh writer threatened

Muslim fundamentalist extremists in Bangladesh issued a death sentence against Taslima Nasrin, a feminist writer, poet and journalist, for her campaign for women's freedom. The mullah who called for Nasrin's execution labeled her "worse than a prostitute" and a traitor for denouncing the persecution of Bangladesh's Hindu minority. Nasrin's writings include *Nirbachita Column* (1991) which details the oppression of women in a male-dominated society and culture. Last summer, fundamentalist clerics pressured the government to ban her novel *Shame* (1992), which depicted the attack by Muslims on a Hindu family in the aftermath of the razing of the Babri mosque in India by Hindu extremists.

Despite the price the mullahs have put on her head, Nasrin refuses to be silent. She wrote of women brutalized and murdered under Islamic law, and criticized the Bangladesh government, whose president is a woman, for succumbing to extremist influence:

...I will not be silenced. Everywhere I look I see women being mistreated, and their oppression justified in the name of religion. Is it not my moral responsibility to protest? Some men would keep women in chains—veiled, illiterate and in the kitchen. There are 60 million women in my country; not more than 15% of them can read and write. How can Bangladesh become a modern country and find its place in the world when it is dragged backward by reactionary attitudes toward half its people?...

The mullahs who would murder me will kill everything progressive in Bangladesh if they are allowed to prevail. It is my duty to try to protect my beautiful country from them. I call on all those who share my values to help me defend my rights. By doing so, they will help save Bangladesh.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. *News & Letters* was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding in 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. *News and Letters Committees* aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of *News and Letters Committees*.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Capitalism's takeover of farming



by Felix Martin, Labor Editor

Leaving Chicago, going south through the farming counties of Illinois and Indiana, we saw no one in the fields—just corn and soybeans as far as the eye could see. It's a different way of farming under capitalism today than it was when I was a farmer.

Farming before World War II was still under the system where each farm was a unit, where the farmer took a wife to produce his own hands to work the farm. Horses and mules were the power for the heavy work, like pulling the tools to work the soil. The feed for that power was produced on the farm. This 160-acre unit produced and reproduced its own life. Up to World War II about 70% of the population lived on the farm.

After the war ended, capitalism began taking over the farming. Tractors began replacing the horses. Where it took nine weeks to produce five-pound broilers the natural way, chickens for the market were now being produced in five weeks. In feeding cattle, the natural three-pound gain per day became, in crowded feed lots and with hormones in the feed, nine pounds per day. This is why meat eaten today has no taste. Quantity reduces quality. This is all about time, producing the most in the smallest amount of time.

I read in an article on farming: "If we were meant to be agriculturists, we would have had longer arms! That's why we have embraced fossil fuels so readily, because when we moved from that forest to the field, it wasn't fun. And that helped us develop an encoded language of behavior through systems called religions, loaded with oughtness. You oughta do this and you oughta do that and you oughta do the other thing. But those encoded languages of behavior broke down when fossil fuel became abundant. You don't need to be so faithful when you have a lot of oil, but you've got to be faithful when you're running on sunlight."

(Continued on page 3)

Black World

Rwanda, genocide and France



by Lou Turner

After experiencing the most barbaric genocide the world has witnessed since World War II and the greatest refugee crisis in the post-war period, Rwanda is on the verge of plunging into another catastrophe. Like previous episodes, the criminally inept UN and a criminally opportunist French foreign policy have conspired, all in the name of "humanitarianism," to thwart the efforts of the new Tutsi-led government in the Rwandan capital of Kigali to restore life to the ravaged country.

The bitter anomaly is that Rwanda will become the victim of a humanitarian aid-created disaster. The million or so mostly Hutu refugees still encamped across the border in Zaire have come under the brutal control of the army and militias of the deposed government of former President Habyarimana, whose death earlier this year touched off the genocide of nearly one million Tutsis and Hutus, and the subsequent refugee crisis.

The 30,000-strong army, headed by officials of the former government has, until recently, been protected by the corrupt regime of Zairean President Mobutu, provided material and logistical support by the Mitterrand government (especially Mitterrand's son Jean-Christophe who was primarily responsible for supplying arms to the Habyarimana regime used in the genocide, even as China supplied it with machetes), and is fed and supplied by the UN and other aid agencies. Because the Zairean military is underpaid or not paid at all, it has also begun to pillage refugee camps and expropriate the vehicles and lodging supplied to officials of the former Rwandan government. The seizure of refugee camps and forced mobilization of some 30,000 refugees at the end of November by the Zairean army also indicates an ambivalence in Mobutu's attitude towards the genocidal exile government and military.

This too is tied to the imperialist maneuvers of the French. As one of the "last hurrahs" of his presidency, the ailing Mitterrand convened a Franco-African summit earlier this year to showcase France's neo-neocolonial profile in Africa at a time when the rest of the West ap-

(Continued on page 8)

Can we stop Republican 100-day plan to roll U.S. back 50 years?

by Michelle Landau

Los Angeles—"We're Americans, and we have special rights in this world, because we're a special people, and every politician had better start learning what that means."

Raucous cheering greeted these words, spoken by Ron Prince, campaign chairman for California's anti-immigrant ballot initiative, Proposition 187. Prince was speaking to a packed auditorium of southern California suburban, white supporters following Prop. 187's passage, 59%-41%, Nov. 8.

The crowd was fired up against the Los Angeles School Board which had joined with immigrants rights groups and civil liberties advocates in a legal brief disputing the initiative's constitutionality. The court case challenges key Prop. 187 provisions: the mandated denial of any form of government assistance to undocumented workers and their families, including children's education and medical care other than in "emergency" situations; and the decree that public officials—school administrators, health care professionals, social workers, police—report to immigration authorities all cases of individuals who are "reasonably suspected" of being in violation of immigration laws. (Until the provisions clear the court challenge, they will not be implemented.)

Simultaneous with the court challenge, California's re-elected Republican Gov. Pete Wilson proposed that a version of Prop. 187 be adopted on the federal level. Newt



Latino youth march in San Francisco against Prop. 187.

Gingrich, rising Republican star and incoming Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, proposed that other types of measures could more forcefully "take care of" "illegals." Clearly nothing as "minor" as unconstitutionality stands in the way of the ambitions of the ascendant right-wing faction of the Republican Party, striding

(Continued on page 9)

Editorial

No to betrayal—support Bosnia!

The decision of the Clinton administration to drop its pretense of opposing the Serbian destruction of Bosnia, at the very moment the Serbs launched a murderous attack on Bihac and other areas, has placed the physical existence of Bosnia and the idea of a multiethnic society in the gravest jeopardy. Now that the U.S., along with the UN and NATO, has openly declared a Serbian victory to be "inevitable" and the Serb conquests in their drive for a "Greater Serbia" to be "irreversible," the Serbs have been given a green light to intensify their genocidal campaign of "ethnic cleansing." In light of this the need for revolutionary solidarity with Bosnia is urgent—not just for the sake of Bosnia but for our own future here at home.

As if on cue, the establishment media rushed to justify the U.S. decision by calling the conflict a "civil war" about which nothing can be done and blaming the Bosnians for inviting the latest attacks by daring to launch an offensive from Bihac last month. Most failed to mention that the Bosnians were trying to break a two-year siege of Bihac, which has been without food deliveries since May—largely because the UN capitulated to the Serb blockade of this "safe haven." Nor did they mention that the Serbs have been attacking other "safe havens" with impunity, such as Tuzla—a city which embodies Bosnia's multicultural heritage.

What we singled out over two years ago—that the Western powers decided from the start to allow Serbia to destroy Bosnia's effort to create a multiethnic nation embracing Muslims, Serbs, and Croats—has now become painfully obvious.*

THE 'SHIFT' IN U.S. POLICY

The Clinton administration has now dropped its pretense of opposing Serbian expansion—expressed earlier in its talk of lifting the arms embargo against Bosnia and endorsement of limited air strikes against Serbian positions. Clinton's stance is partly due to his desire to avoid an open rupture with his European allies and Russia.

The Western rulers planned for December to be a showcase of a "new NATO" by presenting a formula for eventually taking in several former countries of the Soviet bloc, such as Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. But the Clinton administration's talk of lifting the arms embargo against Bosnia, which Britain and France fervently oppose, threatened the effort to convey the im-

pression that the Western alliance had found new unity of purpose in the post-Cold War era.

Faced with the option of either assisting Bosnia or risk fracturing the Western Alliance, the Clinton administration decided to wash its hands of Bosnia altogether. NATO followed suit at its summit in Brussels a few days later by speaking of its "new mission" while barely even mentioning Bosnia.

The new-found unanimity between the U.S. and West European rulers does not mean, however, that tensions between the two have suddenly ended. Those tensions never centered on Bosnia, but rather flow from the way changes in the global economic situation is producing a growing divergence of U.S. and West European interests. Ever since the Pacific Rim surpassed Europe as America's number one trading partner two years ago, the U.S. has been less willing to make Europe the focus of its economic and security interests. This far outweighs differences over Bosnia, which never concerned matters of basic principle.

This is seen in how each of the West's "peace" plans—whether Carrington-Cutiliero, Vance-Owen, Owen-Stoltenberg or today's "Contact Group" of the U.S., Britain, France, Germany and Russia—centered on various ways of dividing Bosnia into distinct "ethnic cantons." Each of the state powers is willing to have Bosnia carved up between Serbia and Croatia, with a small rump "Muslim" enclave in between.

'ETHNIC CLEANSING'— U.S. TO BOSNIA

Clinton's decision to forego the pretense of opposing the Serbian attacks on Bosnia was also crucially affected by the Nov. 8 congressional elections. The racist anti-immigrant sentiment projected by that election stands in sharp contrast to the vision of a multiethnic society inherent within Bosnia's struggle.

What has obscured for many the connection between the Nov. 8 elections and the shift in U.S. policy on Bosnia are the statements by Republican Party ideologues

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* For the development of our unique position on Bosnia, see our pamphlet *Bosnia-Herzegovina: The Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization'* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1992).

Memphis women confront elections

by Laurie Cashdan

I left Chicago for Memphis a week after the elections, as the Republican Right brazenly trumpeted its "Contract with America" with its unabashed attacks on poor women and children. In Memphis I met a dimension of the South that stood in stark contrast to not only the racist, reactionary South embodied in Newt Gingrich, the new House Speaker, but also Clinton's spineless capitulations. At the Center for Research on Women at University of Memphis, and among Black women labor activists meeting nearby, something new was emerging.

Women at the Center for Research on Women poured out anger, fear and questions. As feminist scholars who research southern working-class women and women of color, they are all too familiar with fundamentalist and reactionary ideologies and their consequences. After Clinton's announcement on school prayer, one sociologist declared, "That's it. I was trying hard to give him the benefit of the doubt, but I'm through with him!"

Another scholar shared worries about the hegemony Christian fundamentalism is gaining, especially in areas of the South like northern Florida, where she is from.

Woman as Reason

"The talk radio that my mother listens to all day," she told me, "makes Rush Limbaugh look liberal." Such views paint Clinton and any politicians who cling to the vestiges of the welfare state as "communists!"

What worried her equally was whether radical theory, like postmodernist feminism, articulates how to fight the racism seen in the election.

These concerns with reconstituting a radical feminism that can combat right-wing fundamentalism and place liberation back on the agenda takes on new meaning in light of a discussion among several Black women labor activists. The Right revels in thinking they have pounded the last nail into the coffin of the 1960s revolts. Yet they will succeed only if the freedom movements fail to practice the kind of historic recollection capable of working out a new basis to continue those movements.

I found a unique kind of historic recollection taking place in a meeting over breakfast that included workers who became activists only recently when they decided that they had had it with their plantation-style boss (See Howe Sipes story, p. 3), and others whose history extends back to the Civil Rights Movement.

Ida Leachman, vice-president of Furniture Workers Local 282, contrasted the 1990s to the Civil Rights era: "The old way, the oppression and prejudice was out there. Now it's veiled, so you can hardly see what it is. It's under the disguise of democracy. In the old days it was open: 'colored water fountain.' You could see it."

Another problem, she said, is the sell-out politics of Black conservatives—not only Clarence Thomas but old Civil Rights leaders like Charles Evers. "They now say, 'We don't need handouts, we need to get up and go to work.'" Annie Rolack, a worker whose activism began in Mississippi in the 1960s, agreed, adding, "Maybe they made it, but they left me somewhere along the way."

The attacks on welfare mothers especially concerned them. At Sipes, most workers are single mothers who work fulltime yet still have to rely on AFDC. "They're constantly saying welfare, but they're putting people on welfare," argued Leachman. "With the 'two years and you're off' plan, they're creating soup lines. The jobs are going to Mexico. They're using the word welfare and it means women who are lazy, trifling."

"I had an argument with a lady at work," said Rolack. "I was trying to get her to see that the statistics say that there are more white women on welfare than Black women, but she wouldn't believe me." During a recent strike workers at her job applied for food stamps and

Welfare Ecuadoran-style

My story is about a young girl who, like hundreds of thousands in Ecuador, because they were born women and poor, are condemned to be maids. Almost all maids are indigenous people from the countryside. Maria started working as a maid in the city at the age of 15. She worked cheerfully, seven days a week, 14 to 16 hours a day, with four hours off on Sunday. She made just enough money to buy her clothes and to pay for transportation to her home town once a month.

After five years, Maria got a boyfriend. She felt she had to leave her job because her *patrones* would make her feel ashamed, and maybe cut her free time on Sundays "for her own protection."

When I next saw her two years later, I hardly recognized her. She had lost her front teeth, and her skin was burnt and damaged from two years of selling in the open market, exposed to the equatorial sun. I went to see her later at her rented room. I found it locked, but I heard a sound inside, so I looked in and saw a baby boy crawling on the dirt floor. I got help to force the door, and inside there was also a beautiful little girl, dying on the bed.

I went to find Maria, who was working at the market. We took the child to the hospital, where they found she was in the last stages of malnutrition. When her former *patrones* were told about Maria's situation, they gave her money. But they saw no future for her child.

In Ecuador, there is no system of government support for women with children. Maria got a court order for her husband to contribute to the children, but he laughed at it. The only "welfare" is free distribution of powdered milk and oatmeal from the U.S. It is rumored to be laced with drugs that sterilize women, and is not available in the countryside and shanty towns. —Greta

Medicaid for their children but were denied benefits.

They discussed how racist ideologies translate into welfare practices in Memphis: "White folks make an appointment to pick up food stamps, but Black folks stand in line. It looks like they're the only ones on welfare. Under segregation, some public housing projects were Black and others white. Now they're all Black. The whites live in Section 8 housing. They keep us apart and hurting."

This historic recollection represents a radical consciousness struggling to discover how the future is continuous and discontinuous from the past. After seeing the film, *At the River I Stand*, about the 1968 Memphis sanitation workers strike, I began to wonder if "I Am a Man"—the sanitation workers' banner—may find new concretization today among southern Black working-class women. The 1968 strike took on historic significance not only because Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed there at the start of his Poor People's Campaign, but because "I Am a Man" posed the absolute inseparability of race, class, and human liberation.

While Black women were active throughout the 1960s, their self-consciousness in the 1990s brings them head to head with the retrogressive reality and ideology revealed by the elections. "All the labor and Civil Rights movements come back to human issues," said Annie Rolack. "That's why I want women to get together. I think it's up to us to start something." It may be that "I Am a Woman" will emerge as the real continuation of "I Am a Man" in the period following these elections.

Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Hundreds gathered at Harvard University in November, for women living in Haiti to share ideas with women from the U.S. and Canada on women's rights in Haiti. Conference recommendations will be presented to the new Haitian government. The event was sponsored by HAITIWomen, whose founders include Dessima Williams, former UN ambassador from Grenada. Hundreds of women's organizations throughout Haiti, with help from support groups in the U.S., are fighting discrimination against women in Haiti, including dead-end, low-paying, dangerous factory jobs and the use of rape and violence as weapons of political control.

Women's groups in Canada are outraged at the disregard of violence against women and rise in attacks on women's rights, on the fifth anniversary of the Montreal massacre when 14 women were killed. In November, an abortion clinic doctor in Vancouver was shot in his kitchen, after anti-abortionists repeatedly picketed his home. In Alberta, a judge acquitted a man of battering his wife because he had been under the influence of alcohol and drugs. He based his acquittal on a recent Canadian Supreme Court ruling that overturned the conviction of a Montreal rapist who had been drinking heavily.

Feminist theory debate: minimalist dialectics

In the ongoing debate in N&L on feminist theory, our focus is the search for a philosophy to help Women's Liberation move forward again as an inseparable dimension of the dialectic of revolution. In that search, Jennifer Ring's *Modern Political Theory and Contemporary Feminism: A Dialectical Analysis*¹ is an important contribution that demands a serious discussion. Ring's contention is that most feminist theory, "whether radical or conservative" (p. 7), assumes a different masculine and feminine "nature," the kind of dichotomy that offers no opportunity to change the world, she says. Instead, the dichotomy she seeks a way to overcome is that between objectivity and subjectivity.

Ring is attracted to postmodernism's effort to "transcend traditional dichotomies and traditional categories of analysis." Yet she worries that "in shattering all conventions, in arguing that subjectivity and objectivity are inevitably dichotomous...too much may be relinquished," including any solid historical ground for working out an alternative to the past. What Ring creates to "salvage some central traditional philosophic concepts for feminist theory" is "minimalist dialectics" (pp. 19-20).

She especially wants to salvage what is important for feminism from both the Hegelian and the Marxian dialectic, explaining that her "minimalist dialectics" differs "primarily in terms of its professed agnosticism about origins and ends in history, and in its refusal to accept any truth as 'world historical.' It is thus neither idealist nor materialist: it involves the interplay of materiality and ideas, objectivity and subjectivity" (p. 21).

What makes Ring's book important is that she is adamantly not advocating any "particular political substance" but trying to find a "philosophic structure for feminism" (p. 57). The question is whether, instead of "salvaging" the most important philosophic contributions of Hegel and Marx, she has missed the core of both dialectics. Ring presents her study as a question of "epistemology" and rejects any attempt "to impose a political agenda, to rig political outcomes and turn epistemology into ideology" (p. 21).

But the philosophy of both Hegel and Marx is far more than epistemology and philosophy is far from being "ideology." The Hegelian dialectic represents the revolution in philosophy that Marx transformed into a philosophy of revolution. Neither concerns only an "interplay" between objectivity and subjectivity but a pathway to overcoming all the contradictions we face on the way to their



Women from Amatenango, a Chiapas village, rallied for women's rights in San Cristobal Nov. 25.

Anti-gay props squashed

Boise, Idaho—While the margins of victory are disquieting, the November election did see the defeat of noxious anti-les/bi/gay initiatives in Idaho and Oregon. I was in Boise, Idaho, during election week.

Idaho's Proposition One, written by the so-called "Idaho Citizens' Alliance" (ICA)—a group spawned by Oregon's anti-freedom OCA—would have prohibited equal treatment under the law to lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, and demanded censorship at public libraries and schools. The alliances forged to fight this, under the name No on One, included library and teacher associations, leading Democratic and Republican politicians, some (but not enough) liberal churches, and the small but capable lesbian, gay, and bisexual community. No on One covered the state with literature and posters articulating the faults of the proposition in regard to governmental control, censorship, and taxpayer expense.

Despite all of these strategic positionings, the proposition was defeated by a mere 3,000 votes, less than 1% of ballots cast. The racist underpinnings of anti-gay initiatives, which are at root hostile to the idea of civil rights—re-framed as "special rights"—and operate on a presumption of a scarcity of freedom, had appeal for some white voters, as I found when engaged in phone-banking.

The need for genuine human recognition of the lives and contributions of gay and lesbian people was deliberately downplayed by the No on One campaign, and contemptuously and vocally rejected by ICA supporters. Despite the narrow victory, these election results, in light of the nationwide developments, do not present a sanguine picture for the immediate future of queer lives. Vigilance, solidarity, further coalitions, and a vision for the future are absolutely necessary.

The positive side of the No on One victory could be seen in the community fostered among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and straight allies, protecting a sense of unity and diversity in the struggle. The ability to organize a sophisticated campaign in one of the largest and most geographically challenging states, and to win, has given the community skills and locations for developing self-defined freedom and growth.

—Jennifer

unity, which then becomes a new beginning for reaching freedom. The "end" each dialectic was reaching for was what Raya Dunayevskaya discovered in Hegel to be "Absolute negativity as new beginning" and in Marx to be "revolution in permanence."²

Of the many provocative aspects of the book, what is especially compelling is Ring's discussion in the chapter on "Hegelian Dialectics" of whether or not there is a "feminine nature" and how to confront "questions about the origin of women's oppression without becoming chained to an abstract concept of an unchangeable human nature." In her chapter on "Marxian Dialectics" she discusses Marx's concept of nature as "historical and dialectical. Far from carrying the limitations of an imposed concept it seems potentially liberating" (p. 156).

She takes up four senses of the nature in Marx—as the natural world of plants and animals; as the human body; chronologically as human "prehistory"; and finally "as a state in the future that is fully developed so that human beings can live a species life." It is a passage that resonates to me with Marx's "definition" of "thoroughgoing naturalism" as "Humanism" in his 1844 Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic.

All the more puzzling is it then, that Ring discusses Marx's 1844 Manuscripts at some length and yet misses that it was there that Marx spelled out that his "new Humanism" was distinguished from both Idealism and Materialism, and was "at the same time, the truth uniting both." He made it clear that this demanded not only the transcendence of private property but a second transcendence for "positive Humanism to arise." It was Marx's translation of Hegel's "negation of negation."

The "negation of negation" is the core of the dialectic of Hegel and Marx that Ring has missed. It has nothing to do with what she critiques over and over as "manipulating the method toward substantive ends judged desirable," but everything to do with following the logic of the Idea of Freedom out to its end. Ring has nevertheless produced a serious plunge into trying to work out a philosophy to help Women's Liberation move forward again. Her book demands a far more serious discussion by us than it has received.

—Olga Domanski

1. New York: SUNY Press, 1991

2. Her category of "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning" was created in *Philosophy and Revolution*; for her discussion of "revolution in permanence" see Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation*, and Marx's *Philosophy of Revolution*.

Czech autoworkers strike a warning

by Stephen Steiger

Prague, Czech Republic—The Czech Republic has only one plant producing cars, a company called Skoda. In order to modernize and privatize the plant the Czech government chose in 1991, from among several foreign contenders, the German car giant Volkswagen as its partner. Volkswagen would own eventually 70% of the shares and also pledged to invest eight million marks to modernize production. The agreement represented the biggest investment action in Eastern Europe.

However, VW cancelled the original pledge, reducing the promised amount from eight to 3.4 million marks. The chairman of the VW board suddenly reminded the Czechs that one of the major advantages that had drawn his company into the republic—the relatively cheap wages of the skilled Czech workers—can be put aside by moving part of the Czech production to Mexico where the wages are even lower.

While the management is pointing to the level of wages being higher than the country's average, the trade unions stress the growing intensification of labor. Czech workers are "yielding" most often the same results as their counterparts in Germany, where the wages are at least a third higher.

TENSION OVER DISMISSALS

The smouldering tension between the management and the workers reached a high point last summer when announcements multiplied about dismissals. The layoffs started with foreign workers—800 Cubans, 700 Poles and more than 1,500 Vietnamese—being sent home. It soon became known that 800 Czech workers should also be dismissed.

Another point of friction was the proposed introduction of what VW called "fractionalization" and "integration." The first term means division of the company into lower-level units independent in terms of management and finance. The second means integrating many contractors' workers into the Skoda plant itself as well as transferring its own workers to some contractors' jobs. This would mean for the Skoda workers to do the same job at a lower salary, as most of the small contracting firms pay their workers less.

March, sit-in for shelters

Chicago—Workers from Decatur, Ill., and their supporters sat in the Illinois State capitol building and 31 were arrested Nov. 30. "We were protesting the general mistreatment of people in this state, not just in Decatur," declared a Staley worker about a midday rally that preceded the occupation. Dozens of workers from three embattled unions in Decatur—locked out from A.E. Staley and on strike against Firestone and against Caterpillar—marched to Springfield the day before.

The issue, symbolic of the whole struggle, was the Decatur City Council banning picket shelters from the gates of Staley, despite picketers meeting conditions for keeping the shelters. The governor effectively sided with the Decatur city leaders. "Government as a whole says it's taking a neutral position," said one participant. "Well, they have proven to be siding with the company."

Some 400 people, including Illinois government employees, rallied inside the capitol building. Afterward, the Decatur people went to the governor's office, but he "slipped out the back," said one demonstrator. People sat down and waited until the building closed when police arrested them, roughing up many.

A new group of rank-and-file members from three Decatur unions—Paperworkers, Autoworkers, and Rubberworkers—planned the protest. "We tried this once before, to come up with ideas and come back to the leadership with them," explained one of the activists. "The leadership just did not want to do anything. This time we went ahead and planned something and did it."

—Jim Mills

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

In my farming days I had a lantern and later there was electricity to power the equipment and lights. The question is: What's after these fossil fuels run out? Even with the best methods of farming, it was not a natural way of life, producing itself, which includes building the soil. I read where in ancient society their method of farming turned the land into deserts.

The method of logging in the Northwest—cutting everything clean—is destroying the natural way of the forest. The building of houses, factories and super roads since World War II, coupled with the logging and methods of farming—what effect does this have on the environment?

I have seen a lot of changes in my 73 years. I have seen running springs dry up, branches and creeks dry up, no water running in them in summer. I have seen virgin forests disappear, muddy roads become concrete. Waste has become more than we used to live on.

This year, 1994, for the first time in those 73 years, fruit trees were in blossom in the spring and bloomed again in the fall. Something has gone wrong with nature. In October my tomatoes were in full blossom, just like in the spring, with new tomatoes setting on. With all these signs, I believe that time is running out for allowing all of the things that capitalism has done to nature. We are running out of time.

It was for all these reasons—to which one more was added: the unwillingness of the plant's management to negotiate with the union—that a one-hour warning strike was called for Oct. 17. More than 90% of the workers took part in this strike.

PARTIAL VICTORY

The union won in that the management began negotiating with them within the next two days. It promised to divide the layoffs over a longer period as well as include those who retire voluntarily or because of age and so on. Those working at the same jobs would be paid the same wage whether their employer was Skoda or another company.

The question is if this victory is not only a partial one. The personnel chief of the plant bragged that since 1991 the productivity increased by 37% and in the future 10% would be added yearly. In other words, the intensification will continue. Volkswagen has become the majority shareholder. The Czech government retained the right of co-decision in questions of investment and number of cars produced, but not workers' rights. Relations between workers and management remain tense.

The outlook for the near future is that about 500 workers should be laid off annually. The plant's trade union will need all the support of the Czech and Moravian Trade Union Chamber, the highest trade union authority of the country, in defending workers' rights. It also will need the support of the public which has been far from unequivocal.



Workers of Skoda during the one-hour general strike. The banner on the building reads: Warning General Strike 1994.

Boycott Howe Sipes!

Memphis, Tenn.—The most important thing is winning respect and the same rights for everyone. What they do at Howe Sipes, a baseball apparel and jacket manufacturer, is single us out. The plant manager won't ask people in the union, Furniture Workers Local 282, to work overtime. They hired nine or ten new people, and he'll ask them to work overtime or on Saturdays.

The plant manager will let non-unionists or white ladies walk all over the floor and not say a thing. With union supporters, if you go to the bathroom, he'll yell, "What's going on in there?" They'll do anything to make us mad and get us to leave our jobs. A lot of women have left. But those that are left, we will fight till the end.

When they hire new people, they tell them not to talk to the union supporters. They sit at their machines and won't even come to the break room. People know it would be better if we had a union, but they feel they would be fired or singled out if they supported it.

We had a rally during the summer at Sipes' house in east Memphis, where all the executive types live. We went to all his neighbors, passing out leaflets. We've been putting the heat on. They don't like that out there. They want him to end this.

Sipes got a decertification petition going to get rid of the union by picking out two employees, one white and one Black. He wrote down what he wanted them to say. Before that these two ladies never talked. Then Sipes posted a letter saying there's no more union as of now. It was illegal because management can't have anything to do with a decert petition; it has to be started by workers.

Sipes says he's giving us a raise in the base pay and may raise the ticket price. But our struggle is not about money. It's about respect and dignity. It's for insurance we all can afford and for holidays. He won't even recognize Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday. And it's for better working conditions.

Sipes is trying to make people feel they are better off because of the decertification petition, but it's because the union is there. The people that signed know something's wrong with what Sipes said because we're still having our meetings every week and we wear our union buttons every day.

—Howe Sipes workers

Sinai Kosher apartheid

Editor's note: These stories are from conversations with workers outside the Sinai Kosher Foods plant.

Chicago—The majority of the people at Sinai Kosher are Spanish-speaking with a few Polish. Some of the Spanish-speaking workers speak English and make friends with others. I heard one of the Black ladies say, "I would like us to stick together." The other people say that would be nice, but then another Spanish-speaking person comes around and says, "They'll get you in trouble."

Having the union contract in Spanish and Polish would be nice. There are a lot of foreigners here that don't know their rights. We all need to learn to stay firm and stick together, learn to read, ask questions and think for ourselves, not just follow what the supervisor says.

About 250 people work at Sinai Kosher. Very few are Black workers. How come no Blacks are hiring in here? And once they're in here, they don't stay long. There are only a few Black women in East and West Packaging where they multivac the hot dogs and put them in boxes. The supervisor, Kiran Patel, tells the machine operators to put a Black lady over here and another one over there. The Black women are always kept separated.

The supervisor looks for tell-tales. They get the little light jobs and stuff like that. Here you don't have anyone to talk to about problems like this. The union is just the union; it's no help.

Union-busting by lockout

Detroit—Locked out of their jobs since March 1991, some 50 workers at the National Metal Processing plant in Detroit continue to battle and appeal for aid in their struggle for job reinstatement and back pay. Events leading to the lockout reflect the union-busting patterns experienced by thousands of organized workers.

National Metal, which in 1974 had signed a contract with Allied Industrial Workers Local 267, in 1988 began hiring "employee-leasing firms" to manage the workers and to legally remove the company from responsibility to the workers. In 1990 the third leasing firm, Branch International Services, demanded wage, benefit and representation cuts that the negotiating committee rejected.

In February of 1991 Branch International declared it would not accept the contract provision calling for extension of the old contract if a new agreement was not reached and on March 1, four days before the contract's expiration, proposed cutting the incentive pay scale.

The workers knew the company wanted them to strike, but they insisted on continuation of the negotiations. When they got to the plant on the morning of March 5, they found the gates padlocked, armed guards all around and scabs being slipped in through the back entrance.

Despite decisions by both the Labor Board and the courts upholding the union and the workers, both the company and leasing firm have stonewalled every step in the proceedings, denying responsibility. In the years since the lockout the workers and their families have endured great hardships and need all the help they can get in their battle for justice. Direct contributions can be sent to Locked-out National Metal Workers, P.O. Box 11128, Detroit, MI 48211.

—Andy Phillips

Injuries last straw

Grayson, Ky.—We voted in the Fireman and Oilers Union at Cook Family Foods on Sept. 19, 1991. Approximately 300 people voted. The vote was down the middle, with the deciding "factors" being three workers that we said had been illegally fired. The National Labor Relations Board said their votes counted. On Nov. 28, 1993 we voted to strike and went on strike the same day. One striker, although innocent, has been imprisoned for hitting a scab.

Cook Family Foods has been here since February of 1991. When they first opened up, people were happy with jobs coming in, because people were out of work and this area had one of the lower employment rates in the state. People were pretty excited.

After a couple of years, things started happening. Full production was up to 500 people per shift, about 1,000 all together. We broke a production record of 4.6 million pounds of ham in one week. People started getting hurt. A man on second shift was sawing some of the last hams before going home. One of the hams was frozen and, when the blade hit it, it sawed his thumb up the middle. After four days—he was still shot up with morphine—the company wanted him to come to work to do light duty. You can't do any of the jobs with one hand.

From the beginning Cook's was anti-union all the way. When we went in for orientation, the director of human resources talked about how unions were no good and we didn't need them because Cook's was fair. They threatened to fire us if we went for a union. When we found out they couldn't fire us, they put people in bad positions on the line and harassed them until they quit.

They are running the plant with scabs now, but they aren't producing like they were. One thing they did was take away the point system they had set up for us. If you missed a day but you called in, you got two points. If you didn't call in, it was five points. If you were late, you got a half point. If you got 15 points, then you got fired. The problem was the company laid on points because they wouldn't give people sick days.

—Striking meatpacker

Contributions which are urgently needed can be sent to IBFO Grayson Strike Relief, P.O. Box 125, Russell, KY 41169.

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

Editor's note: This summer saw the Aug. 5 Malecon revolt in Havana, with thousands of Cuban refugees taking to the seas and new Clinton-Castro accords on immigration. Under the impact of these events, we reprint Raya Dunayevskaya's analysis of the first three years of Cuba under Fidel Castro that was originally published in *News & Letters*, November 1962. It can be found in the *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development*, (microfilm #6695).

The sudden transformation of Cuba into a Russian missile base, followed by the even more sudden dismantling of the base, makes it necessary to probe deeply into the matter of what happens after a revolution is won and the heroes from the mountains become the administrators of the state.

This paramount question is not merely a new variation of the old moralistic question about how power corrupts and how absolute power corrupts absolutely. Rather, it is one that concerns the internal dynamics of revolutions in underdeveloped economies that evolved out of small guerrilla bands and came to fruition in a nuclear age which has split the whole world into two, and only two, Big Powers—the United States and Russia.

In contrast to the African Revolutions which, after victory, set out on a course of "positive neutralism," the Cuban Revolution was, after a year, sucked into the Russian-Chinese Communist orbit. Fidel Castro now claims that there is no third road. The truth, however, is that Cuban independence was achieved without Communist help and the first year of revolution revealed an original philosophic as well as social transformation.

Between that first year and the present satellite status, the point of transition was caused, not by a "foreign agent," but by natural affinity between Fidel Castro, administrator, and both the native and world Communists. Let's take a closer look at these three clearly discernible stages that transpired since Fidel Castro came to power nearly four years ago, in January 1959.

THE FIRST YEAR OF REVOLUTION

The first year of revolution unfolded with no dichotomy between philosophy and deed. The banner it unfurled made it as original in ideology as in its indigenous roots. Even Fidel Castro could express it succinctly then. The Cuban Revolution, he wrote, was "a humanistic revolution because it does not deprive man of his essence, but holds him as its basic aim. Capitalism sacrifices man; the Communist state, by its totalitarian concept, sacrifices the rights of man."

The Cuban Revolution was a high stage in the development of freedom in the whole of Latin America. It did more than overthrow the cruel and despotic Batista dictatorship, which was both puppet of American imperialism and tyrant over its own nation. It achieved a revolution in agricultural relations.

Although the State, and not the agricultural worker, is the owner of these expropriated vast tracts of land, the feeling of liberation was exhilarating, and true, when compared with the previous state of servitude to the United Fruit Company.

While no comparable revolution in industrial relations was achieved, the fact that there was little industry in Cuba, and the people had to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps, when they didn't even have boots, also made the workers willingly, though not uncritically, identify themselves with Fidel Castro and his July 26th Movement.

The first point of division came when the workers took

issue with the State Plan and wanted to make sure of retaining their trade unions. Fidel Castro attended their trade union congress to urge the election of Communists whom he had found to be the most enthusiastic of State Planners and concerned with "rational investment." When the trade unions balked at electing Communists who had nothing to do with their revolution, and had, in fact, played with Batista, Castro declared the congress "a madhouse."

This kinship with the Communists, an attraction of one bossist attitude to another; this sharing of a conception of "the backwardness of the masses who had to be led"; this ordering about of workers to obey planned production targets and get over their "lack of revolutionary conscience and enthusiasm in their work"; in a word, this substitute of the State Plan for the people's needs marks the first divide between the Cuban state leaders and the Cuban workers.

THE POINT OF TRANSITION

It was the beginning of the end also of the independence of the July 26th Movement and the beginning of domination by the Cuban Communist Party whose general secretary, Blas Roca, began to spout forth counter-revolutionary slanders: "The true role of Trotskyism throughout the entire world is well known. In their eagerness to fight the Soviet Union, they went into the ranks of Hitler's apparatus of espionage and provocation and into that of the North American imperialists...Today in Cuba we also have libertarian anarcho-syndicalists."

Such outbursts in Havana and Khrushchev's declaration at the UN prompted us to write in September 1960:

Russia is now trying to make it appear that it ended America's domination of Cuba. It isn't true. To the extent that the revolution is due to any other source than the Cuban people themselves, it is due



to the African Revolutions which preceded it.

By fighting for independence from imperialism and embarking on a new path of development, the African Revolutions also put an end to the isolation of Latin America in the Western Hemisphere as well as to the loneliness, the feeling of helplessness of any underdeveloped country anywhere in the world.

The only thing Russia can rightly claim credit for is hardening Castro's natural petty-bourgeois tendency to solve administratively what can only be solved through the self-activity of the masses. This hardening of the administrative mentality has meant that revolutionary changes notwithstanding, the single element of not creating a form for the release of the creative energies of the masses, of not allowing any reorganization from below, of doing everything from above, that single element of the administrative mentality, which is the hallmark of our age of state-capitalism, was sufficient to begin the rapid descent of Cuba into the quagmire of Russian-Chinese totalitarianism.

At this point the tragedy is assuming tragically comic aspects. Fidel Castro thinks he is "The Leader." In truth, he is being led. He does not even have any comprehension of where in the world's capitalist complex he is being led to.

That great German philosopher, Hegel, spoke with profundity about just such blabbermouths seeking "self-expression." He said they reflected "an unreflective, incoherent stage of consciousness" characteristic of societies that are no more than a "community of animals."

"An unreflective incoherent stage of consciousness"—what could better describe a Castro?—characteristic of a "society as a community of animals." This is the best contemporary description I have yet seen anywhere of state-capitalist societies like Mao's China.

ENTER RUSSIA

Russia has certainly hit the jackpot in Cuba, and America is eaten up with jealousy. Nowhere, from Alaska to Adenauer's West Germany, does America have so monolithic, anxious, enthusiastic, undivided and blithely unsuspecting a collaborator-victim, 90 miles from the shore of its main protagonist, as Russia has in Cuba.

As if sucked into the jet-propelled Ilyushin, the Cuban Revolution has been unable to resist the totalitarian pull of Russian state-capitalism, with the administrative mentality running roughshod over the self-activity of the masses. Suddenly we are face to face with the negative element of a world crisis that will not let go of the newly-freed countries.

Castro fancies that his loud pronouncements against the stupidities of the American State Department "make up" for his "incoherent stage of consciousness."

In truth, they only too clearly show that this "haughty vassal"—to use yet another expression of Hegel's—is so bitten by the state-capitalist

bug—that is, "a passion for bossing"—that he does not even stop to reflect that he is trying to foist on the Cuban people hands made bloody by their crushing of the Hungarian people's revolt. Nothing can wash those hands clean. NOTHING...

This new arrogant administrator may feel sufficiently like a king, now that he has a nuclear power at his side, as to issue invitations to all underdeveloped countries to come to a command performance in Havana. The African countries gave him his first rebuff when they refused to be taken in by this late-comer on the revolutionary scene and his pretensions of "world leadership."

In declining the invitations for a conference in this hemisphere, when they have carried on the struggles for freedom decades ahead of him in Africa, they have given Castro his first lesson in freedom that is not dependent on Russia and China who are only using the Cuban Revolution to further their own ends of world conquest.

There is yet time to escape the world holocaust Mao Zedong is in such a hurry to unleash today, not tomorrow but today, IF Fidel's Cuba will break loose from both poles of capital...*

The two years that have passed since this was written have witnessed Castro's irretrievable entanglement in the Communist web, including also his total acceptance of the Communist perversion of Marxism. Fidel Castro is a man who thinks that if he himself drives the last nail into his own coffin, he thereby remains alive, and, if still alive, then certainly he is still the leader!

THE TRAGEDY OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

Far from seeing that when the going got tough between the Big Two Powers Khrushchev would find him to be expendable, Castro was busy "proving," on Dec. 2, 1961, that, long before he got power, he had read Marx's Capital "up to page 370" and "a text of Lenin" and would remain "a Marxist-Leninist to the end of my life." Misnamed as a speech on "Marxism-Leninism," Castro only proves that he has swallowed hook, line and sinker the Communist perversion of Marxism-Leninism. In any case, both the occasion for, and purpose of, the speech is to excuse the final dissolution of the July 26th Movement into the Communist Party, now renamed the Integrated Revolutionary Organization. He has discovered that the single party state is "the ideal government" and that that single party "is a selective party which leads."

It matters little whether, by the time Castro equated "The Revolution" he had made without any party to "The Party," he was also signing away to Russia the rights to missile bases and their operation. There was little left of Cuba that remained in the hands of the working people themselves. The State Plan reigned supreme and thought control was so total that it not only choked off the philosophy of freedom but overfilled the prisons.

Where "the party to lead" dominates one's every thought, and the masses to be led must have no organizations of their own, there the fulfillment of the State Plan takes the place of the liberation of mankind. Where one is busy with power politics rather than the release of human energies for their self-development, there one stifles both the human needs of a single country and the human aspirations of the forward movement of mankind the world over. Where missile bases have sprouted, and may again, there one has buried the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism.

The leadership complex, itself a by-product of our state-capitalist age and its drive for world domination, blinds Castro totally to the creativity of the masses. That, for him, remains an unopened book. Therein lies the tragedy of the Cuban Revolution.

* From "On War and Peace," The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development, microfilm #2780.

Brazil's shantytowns

New York—The military occupation of the favelas (shantytowns) of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in November was not, as the oppressors claimed, a "progressive operation of asphyxia to drug dealers," but clearly an operation to asphyxiate the Brazilian poor. The military control of the access of the favelas, like in the Jewish ghetto of Nazi Europe or in the Algerian casbah of the imperialist French government, is only one of the conditions that the poor in Brazil must bear.

To "control" one of the favelas, ten light armored tanks and several jeeps with machine guns were necessary. Despite the incredible "operation" only a few arrests were made and a few weapons and small quantities of drugs were found. Who did the military want to impress? Certainly not the Brazilian masses, who had already suffered years of repression during the last dictatorship that was later replaced by a "democracy" that does not seem to be too different.

In the 1960s, the military's excuse to repress the poor was to stop Communism. Today the excuse of the "military-democracy" is to stop drugs. Always, in the capitalist system, the real purpose of repressing the poor is their very existence. In an alienated world, in a world of opposites, the very existence of the poor means struggle—struggle against the system that wants to perpetuate their existence and at the same time wants to destroy their humanity.

—Carlos Varela

A philosophic foundation for viewing Cuba today

"Even where a state like Cuba is protected from the worst whims of the world market and where state planning is total, the price of sugar is still dependent upon the socially necessary labor time established by world production. In a word, to plan or not to plan is not the decisive question. The state of technological development and the accumulated capital are the determinants, the only determinants, when the masses are not allowed their self-activity, which threatens to undermine the stability of the whole globe, and which did gain the Africans freedom."

Philosophy and Revolution From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao

(Original edition 1973; new expanded edition 1989; also available in Spanish, German, Italian, Russian)

See literature ad on page 7.

Editorial

Stop the betrayal of Bosnia

(Continued from page 1)

like Bob Dole, who criticizes the actions of the Clinton administration by calling for direct U.S. military intervention against Serbia. Dole and the Republicans are motivated not by any concern for Bosnia's multiethnic heritage, but rather by the desire to "demonstrate U.S. military resolve overseas."

Precisely for that reason, Dole and the Republicans are as close to being "allies" to the Bosnians as day is to night. As soon as Bosnia is seen as not fitting into the scheme of the U.S.'s geopolitical interests or aiding the Republicans' effort to gain control over foreign policy from the White House, the "inevitability" of a Serbian victory will suddenly be discovered by these pundits too.

The Nov. 8 elections only made it all the easier to condone Serbia's "ethnic cleansing" because it projects a racist climate in which it has become "politically correct" to undermine efforts to project multiethnic cooperation in the face of racist bigotry.

WHAT TO DO?

The recent events underscore the emptiness of appealing to any state power to aid Bosnia. While we must continue to insist that the arms embargo on Bosnia be lifted, the state powers have clearly shown that they have no intention of standing in the way of Serbia's designs.

But this does not mean that Bosnia's struggle is lost. Despite the talk of an "inevitable" Serb victory, the heroic resistance of the Bosnian people—which includes not just Muslims but also Serbs and Croats who see themselves as part of a common "Bosnian" heritage—may yet forestall a Serb victory. In light of this it has never been more important to aid the struggle through non-governmental person-to-person and organization-to-organization assistance.

But most urgent of all, the idea inherent in Bosnia's struggle must not be allowed to perish. Great revolutionists from Marx to Rosa Luxemburg emphasized the importance of not allowing the principle of liberation embedded in the dialectic of events to go under, even in the face of defeat.

The idea of a multiethnic society may not represent the full articulation of a concept of new human relations opposed to capitalist alienation, but it is a crucial part of

having such an emancipatory concept emerge. What stands in the way of achieving this is not just the rulers, but the failure of their opponents to free themselves



Residents of Sarajevo denounce the U.S.-UN-NATO betrayal of Bosnia

from an array of "mind-forged manacles" about Bosnia.

It is bad enough for the mainstream media to distort Bosnia's fight by referring to the "Muslim" government, the "civil war," or "ancient tribal feuds and rivalries." But what are we to say of "leftists" who mouth such rubbish? It only shows how insensitive those who claim to be "revolutionaries" have become to the most basic aspirations for human liberation.

It is true that in face of the genocidal attacks of the Serbs (and to a lesser degree the Croats) the tendencies within the Bosnian government which would forego the vision of multiculturalism in favor of Muslim exclusivism have grown in the recent period. But that does not change the fact that the underlying drive of the Bosnian struggle remains rooted in a vision of multiculturalism, especially in Sarajevo and Tuzla—the areas that the Serbs have targeted for new attacks.

If we allow the silence and inaction on Bosnia to continue, we will not only promote complicity with ongoing genocide—we will also fail to develop a banner of liberation opposed to the attitudes of racial intolerance and "ethnic cleansing" which is growing right here in the U.S.

—Dec. 3, 1994

Voices of Bosnian women

Editor's note: Three Bosnian women spoke recently to News and Letters Committees:

Chicago—Mima: I would like a multiethnic Bosnia with all my Croat and Serbian friends as well because that's part of my culture, not a purely ethnically clean Bosnia with all Muslims around me. That's not the world that we lived in. And I think we should all fight for a multi-ethnic society because there are a lot more people over there that stayed in Bosnia that are not heard and have no chance to speak of what they want because they are in the situation where they have to fight to survive. And if they have to say that they are all for a Muslim government, they will say that in order to survive.

Ada: The first time in my life that I declared myself a Muslim was in the U.S. In Yugoslavia, when I had the choice of identifying myself as Muslim or Yugoslav, I declared myself a Yugoslav. When the war started, I was asked if I am Serb or Croat or Muslim. I would say I am Bosnian. I have so many friends who are Serb and Croat and mixed. But we would prefer to be called Bosnians.

The identification of people as Serb, Croat and Muslim was part of a purposeful government plan to split Bosnia. We didn't have this separation in Bosnia up until about ten years ago. The talk of "ancient ethnic hatred" is not true. I lived in Belgrade for years, and never sensed hostility. For 39 years, I wasn't able to recognize people's culture by their name.

Selma: I started high school in 1991. At that time, Serbian students were beginning to say how proud they were of being Serbs. At first Muslim students were ashamed to say they were Muslims. But when we saw how the Serbian and some Croatian students were treating us, we started calling ourselves Muslims.

Mima: The U.S. was too indecisive. France and England were not interested in what happened to Bosnia. They wanted to help Serbia. The UN helped with ethnic cleansing, by ghettoizing Muslims in "safe havens" and transporting them from one place to another. UN soldiers have been helping Serbian troops all along.

Ada: I still think that the only way to put people together again is to put war criminals on trial. There are still Serbs who are fighting on the side of the Bosnian people. Things are working out now between Muslims and Croats. It will take time, but people can live together again. We don't have to give in to hatred. If Bosnia is divided, there is no chance for peace there. What would you say if someone tried to divide the U.S.?

Philosophic Dialogue

Though the importance of Raya Dunayevskaya's lecture "Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning" (reprinted in the October and November issues of N&L) may not have been evident when it was first delivered two decades ago, it would be hard to say this in 1994. This is especially so in light of Francis Fukuyama's argument that Hegel's Absolute expresses today's reality in that the "end of history" supposedly posed by Hegel in his chapter on "Absolute Knowledge" in the *Phenomenology of Mind* describes the way today's "post-socialist" world has "put an end" to the historic antagonisms of the past century. The need to critique this spurious notion has raised the question of how the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic poses, not the "end of history," but rather the conceptual ground for a revolutionary new beginning.

This is directly spoken to in Dunayevskaya's discussion of the final chapter of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, "The Absolute Idea." As against seeing this as an "endpoint," she argues that the Absolute Idea is so infected with negativity that it is "the driving force to ever-new beginnings." This ceaseless movement is not driven by "synthesis" but rather by "absolute negativity"—the movement through both negation of what is and "negation of the negation."

Especially striking is her view that Hegel does not limit this movement through double negation to thought alone. She quotes Hegel as saying that the dialectical

Hegel, Adorno, and dialectics today

mediation needed to reach a new beginning "does not belong to a comprehension by means of thinking." It appears that for Hegel new beginnings emerge when "the negation of the negation" permeates theory and practice.

MARX AND ABSOLUTE NEGATIVITY

This may bring to mind Marx's appropriation of Hegel's concept of "absolute negativity" in his *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. In its final essay, "The Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," Marx argues that the "communist" abolition of private property is only a first negation; to reach genuine liberation—which he calls "positive humanism, beginning from itself"—requires a negation of this negation. Through this concretization of second negativity, Marx shows that Hegel's dialectic does not apply to thought alone.

Yet it was precisely this movement through second negativity which post-Marx Marxists tended to ignore. Indeed, it can be argued that the tragedy of the socialist movement is that it stopped dead at first negation by focusing on the mere negation of private property without reaching Marx's vision of "positive humanism." Viewed in this light, Dunayevskaya's call for a direct return to Hegel's concept of "absolute negativity" speaks to the search for new philosophic ground to reconstitute the Marxian concept of revolution.

The difficulty of achieving this, however, is spoken to in her critique of Theodor Adorno. Adorno had a far deeper understanding of Hegel than most Marxists, who dismissed Hegel's "Absolute"—the realm in which "thought thinks itself"—on the grounds that it presumes the "annulling" of objectivity by mere subjective cognition. Though Adorno critiqued Hegel's idea of the subject absorbing objectivity into itself, he denied that this implies the annulment of objectivity.

In his 1957 "Aspects of the Hegelian Dialectic" he wrote, "It is precisely the construction of the absolute subject in Hegel that does justice to an objectivity indissoluble in subjectivity...the dialectic is not a mere method by which spirit might elude the cogency of its object—in Hegel the dialectic literally accomplishes the opposite, the permanent confrontation of the object with its concept."

A similar point is made in his *Negative Dialectics*: "Even to Hegel, after all, subjectivity is the universal and the total identity. He defies it. But he accomplishes the opposite as well, an insight into the subject as a self-manifesting objectivity" (p. 350).

Adorno thus did not dismiss Hegel's concept that true objectivity is a result of subjective mediation. "The real can be considered rational," he wrote in 1957, "only insofar as the idea of freedom, that is, human being's genuine self-determination, shines through it."

WHY ADORNO'S REDUCTIONISM?

So how could Adorno write this and still argue that

"the negation of the negation" is the "enemy" which must be removed from Marxism? Why his insistence that "absolute negativity" cannot lead to any positive result? Why did he even go so far as to introduce "some sort of kinship" between absolute negativity and the holocaust?

By doing so Adorno ends up reducing "absolute negativity" to the "pure negativity" critiqued by Hegel in the section "Absolute Freedom and Terror" in the *Phenomenology of Mind*. Hegel there shows that relying on first negation to achieve freedom without ever reaching second negation amounts to a "mere rage and fury of destruction," a "death that achieves nothing, embraces nothing within its grasp."

Why did Adorno fall for such a "vulgar" reduction of "absolute negativity"? The answer, it seems to me, lies in how he allowed the "death of the dialectic" which he had seen in Germany in the 1930s and 1940s to define the very contours of his thought in the ensuing decades.

Adorno was a serious thinker, one whose "very reason for being" (as Dunayevskaya put it) was dialectics. Yet the retrogression which he saw in the 1930s and 1940s was so severe that it subsumed the expression of any positive emerging from out of the negative. The destruction was so total, the retrogression so awesome, that Adorno could not conceive of how a new expression of "positive humanism, beginning from itself" could emerge from the dialectic of "second negativity"—even when a new stage of revolt arose in the mid-1950s with the East German revolt and Hungarian Revolution, in which the masses unfurled a banner of freedom opposed to both totalitarian Communism and Western capitalism.

If we are to work out a philosophic new beginning today, we must grapple with what prevented Adorno from seeing the need to make a new beginning from absolute negativity. After all, we have lived through a certain "death of the dialectic" ourselves over the past decade, as seen in the endless political retrogression and the profound crisis reached in the radical movements worldwide. Since the voices of revolt are hardly as "loud and clear" today as they were in the mid-1950s to 1960s, it has become even easier than in Adorno's period for theoreticians to skip over the dialectic of negativity altogether.

The question this poses, is will we allow today's retrogression to define the contours of our thought, or will we rise to the challenge of hewing out the philosophic-political concepts needed to speak to and anticipate new forms of revolutionary opposition to come?

As Dunayevskaya wrote in 1984, "The dialectics of revolution keep re-emerging in ever newer appearances, as new forces and new passions are born anew. And yet the dialectic principle of second negativity never changes." The need to work out a new beginning on the basis of this principle underlines the need for more dialogue in N&L on the todayness of Hegel's Absolutes.

—Peter Wermuth

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AFTER THE ELECTIONS—RACISM, THE ECONOMY, AND THE REAL CRIMINALS

Newt Gingrich and the Republicans are the New Malthusians. Here's what Engels wrote about the 1834 Poor Law reform in England: "all relief in money and provisions (i.e. food stamps) was abolished; the only relief allowed was admission to the workhouse...such as to frighten away everyone who has the slightest prospect of life without public charity...the workhouse has been the most repulsive residence which refined ingenuity of a Malthusian can invent."

The same logic is with us today, 160 years later. Life must be made so dire for the poor that they are frightened away from any public assistance. It is the Republican plan to get government out of American life by building orphanages and prisons, prisons, prisons.

Shelley
New York

Although Oliver North did not make the Senate this time with the open shift to the right in the mid-term elections, his chances have greatly improved for an eventual run for the White House. If this time around he already got financial support worth about \$17 million from his right-wing supporters, just imagine the unlimited funds he would have at his disposal when the time will come to run for the presidency!

I heard a telling comment about the present state of "democracy" in the U.S. In view of the fact that these days it takes at least \$15-\$20 million to run a proper election campaign, TV ads, and so on (most or all of it provided by personal interest groups), Abraham Lincoln would have absolutely no chance to be elected. So much for the present state of "American-style democracy."

Laszlo Gati
Vancouver

A lot of workers hate Clinton because he promised change and has produced none. But white workers' rage can too often turn against immigrants, Blacks, women, gays—and even to fascism. White and Black workers face the same boss, pay the same taxes, get screwed by the same union. Why does the anger turn in such different directions? Racism is the key.

J.M.
New York

Ever since Proposition 187 came up there has been a great divide between Chicanos who have been here a year or two and those who have just arrived. Those here for a while think 187 is bad only because they might be reported as "suspected illegals," not because it would hurt us who are illegal. They blame us for their troubles. Can't they see the law may start with us but will extend to them? In saying we can't work and our children can't see doctors they are trying to kill us off, one by one.

26-year-old mother
Los Angeles

The problem is not that immigrants (documented or undocumented) use social services, which are necessary in developing the future work force and the base of this country. The problem is that we are represented by inept and socially irresponsible politicians, like Gov. Pete Wilson, who are incapable of resolving the economic problems today. Those problems are deep, structural and rooted in the economic system itself.

Comite Latino
California

On many occasions, workers from Latin America have told me that they work in NYC from 12 to 14 hours a day, six to seven days a week, and they are exploited by their bosses. They are well aware of this as well as the increasing persecution they suffer as "illegal" immigrants. Nevertheless, many have told me that they feel more "freedom" in the U.S.

The racism that Latin American workers all over this country face makes it difficult to understand how they can feel more freedom. But as a Mexican immigrant working 13 hours a day, 6 days a week, in a fish market in Washington Heights, Manhattan, told me: "In Mexico, working the same number of hours, I couldn't sustain my family. I couldn't even hang out with my friends at the corner without being constantly harassed and beaten by the police." On the

other hand, many Latin American students in the U.S., soaked with a nationalist ideology, think the opposite of the workers. They tend to idealize their countries as paradises. They also experience racism, in different forms, but nobody wants to talk about it. Silence=Death.

Carlos Varela
New York City

With the horrendous prospect of the electric chair facing New Yorkers again, Lou Turner's column (November N&L) "Race—the final frontier" compels us "to face with sober senses" what is happening around us in these United States. The only humanity brought into American life has been through people's struggles against this wretched capitalism. That history is being obliterated and fear is being allowed to fill the void. In its drive to rid itself of those it no longer needs for its future, U.S. capitalism shows what is in store for all workers. Black workers, the unemployed, the homeless, already are a part of that future. It bears repeating that Chiapas, the L.A. rebellion and the struggles of workers North and South send a different message and a desire for a different future.

Too old to be hired
New York

Now that the elections are over and the Republicans have moved in, they are saying the Crime Bill is too soft and we need more prisons and police to take care of the soaring crime rate. I'd suggest that the Republicans and Democrats alike (is there a difference?) who are so anxious to pass a tougher Crime Bill could solve the crime problem by locking themselves up. They are the real criminals and should be charged with crimes against humanity.

Martin Almora
Illinois



Tomiyama Taeko

50 YEARS AFTER HIROSHIMA

This year—when not only has the Smithsonian Institute capitulated to the reactionary pressures not to depict the truth in its exhibit about the bombs the U.S. dropped on Japan 50 years ago, but the government is actually planning to issue a new stamp to celebrate that murderous, inexcusable act—the 1955 Peace Calendar issued by the War Resisters League has become an important act of protest. It is a 5½ by 8½-inch desk calendar with 128 pages and includes messages from the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, anti-nuclear and peace resources, and international contacts. It is called this year: "With Peace on Our Wings: 50 Years of Resistance to the Bomb." It can be ordered from the WRL (339 Lafayette St., NYC 10012) for only \$12.

Anti-war activist
Chicago

In the late 1970s I was active here in the campaign to stop the neutron bomb. That bomb exemplified to me the essence of capitalism's inhumanity: it would kill people, but leave the buildings standing. I've worn a button from that campaign every day since then to remind me of what I'm against.

New subscriber
Amsterdam, the Netherlands

SOLIDARITY WITH BOSNIA

As a voluntary teacher in Tuzla and Zenica, I can tell you that people in Bosnia who cling to the Bosnian idea have a hope, like a candle light in a blizzard that needs shelter until the end of this long dark winter. We (outsiders like me) should not let it be extinguished. The preservation of morality and civility must come both from outside and inside, even though those inside Bosnia are the ones who will determine which course

Readers' Views

they are going to take.

A phrase like "peaceful co-existence of different nationalities" has been used to explain the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Why does one have to use words like "co-existence" and "different nationalities"? They do not apply to the real Bosnians, whose status is "normal existence of one people." They are Bosnians before being Muslims, Croats, Serbs or others. They are people before being religiously distinguished.

Teacher
Bosnia-Herzegovina

I have become accustomed to hearing some very odd things said about Bosnia by leftists over the last few years, but I was quite stunned by the comments of Noam Chomsky at a lecture last month at Loyola University. Chomsky dismissed the idea that the Left has not responded to the crisis in Bosnia, arguing that there has been plenty of discussion and action on the issue—as if unaware of the minimal amount of support work on this issue in the U.S. Moreover, Chomsky said the one power which is in the position to aid Bosnia is Iran! He said that Iran has a "vested interest" in the future of Bosnia.

I could hardly believe my ears. To the extent that Iran has a "vested interest" in Bosnia, it is to assist the force of Muslim exclusivism at the expense of the idea the Bosnians have been fighting for from the start—the maintenance of a multiethnic society. Asking Iran to intervene in Bosnia is equivalent to asking Stalinist Russia to intervene in the Spanish Revolution of the 1930s!

Peter Hudis
Chicago

THE 'BELL CURVE'

A lot of things heat me up. The Bell Curve spilled the mercury out of my thermometer. Lou Turner (in November N&L) talks about the "racism of middle-class social anxiety rooted in the structural dynamics of current economic reality" as "retrogressively new." The idea that Black brains are genetically inferior to white ones never was discarded but covered by guilt so that the "moral" consciousness and consensus in the post-civil rights period wasn't genuine. Retrogression returns in a historical time of ascendant state-capitalism and intensified class structure.

The New York Review of Books points to the book's "tainted sources." Seventeen of the researchers have contributed to Mankind Quarterly, founded by a champion of South African apartheid and bankrolled by the "Pioneer Fund" established by Wickliffe Draper, who was sympathetic to Nazi Germany. Herrnstein and Murray might or might not be answerable for the beliefs of their crowd, but they, more than suspiciously, overlap with Mankind Quarterly in re-introducing eugenic thinking into the public policy debate.

Sheila Garden
New York

The Bell Curve by Murray and Herrnstein is racist tripe. From 1954 to 1974 I was school psychologist at Roeper School for gifted children in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., and gave over 3,000 Stanford-Binet tests for entrance, to white and Black children, all of whom were considered gifted by somebody. Of all the white children I tested, 99% scored in the gifted category; of all the Black children 98% scored in that category. Admittedly it was a select group but both groups were select and 1% difference cannot be counted as of any significance.

At Roeper we expected children to succeed and they did. When I was doing my practicum prior to being certified, I was sent to a school with all Black children, staff and administration. Every adult expected those children to fail and they did. Everyone has read of dedicated teachers who took groups of dropouts and turned them into successful college students. It is not Blacks who are dumb. It is our system of education that is dumb.

Margaret
Hawaii

HAITI'S STRUGGLE

More than 60 demonstrators converged at CIA headquarters in Langley, Va., with banners and signs on Oct. 31 to protest the covert work of the CIA, particularly in Haiti where it has been verified that CIA personnel were present when the coup to overthrow President Aristide was being planned. We didn't get to talk to the Director, but did talk to a public relations representative who made it clear the CIA receives its directives from the State Department. I am filled with rage thinking of those all over the world who have died through those directives. The CIA is an arm of a corrupt state out to destroy countries that do not fit their mold, countries struggling for economic justice and freedom. Haiti is the most recent target.

Outraged
New Haven, Conn.

The editorial on Haiti in November N&L exposes the interests of U.S. industry and the IMF in Haiti and raises a number of questions.

Some who were not "pro-intervention" and did not think U.S. troops would bring democracy saw an opening being created by the Haitian masses when they "seized the moment" and conducted themselves in a way contrary to what the U.S. military intended. I do not know if the Haitian masses agreed with the Haitian Left and were against intervention, but when it happened they attempted to turn it into something different and in that lies the opening some were interested in. Whether the "moment" has passed is another story.

Angela Terrano
New York

At the Marxist-Humanist Forum on Haiti here, a Black graduate student said he knew it sounded reformist, but what could Aristide do except accept aid and the limitations from the U.S. and World Bank, because otherwise didn't it mean that Haitians would literally starve to death? Of course, there could be no "prescriptive" answer. Instead, we spoke of the fact that a significant part of the grassroots movement within Haiti had called for the restoration of Aristide without U.S. intervention. The movement was seeking an alternative pathway forward. It is the lack of posing any liberatory alternative to capitalism that is the most crucial factor facing freedom struggles today.

E. Walker
Oregon



ARTISTS FOR SURVIVAL

Original children's artwork from around the world will be shown by Artists for Survival at the Great Hall of the Boston Public Library at Copley Square during the month of December. Featured will be poignant and tender work on war and peace, the preservation/destruction of nature, urban violence, and a variety of other social issues. The young artists hail from the USA, Bangladesh, Armenia, Russia, India, Tibet, Australia and Ethiopia.

A special attraction will be artwork on our "shalom/sala'am" by boys and girls from Palestine, Israel, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan and the USA, done at the "Seeds of Peace" camp in Maine last summer. Any reader who wants to participate in this project through their schools or international contacts should write AFS, Worldwide Building, 144 Moody St., Waltham, MA 02154, USA, or call (617) 891-4235.

Mitch Kamen
Boston

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NEWS & LETTERS
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'HEGEL'S ABSOLUTE AS NEW BEGINNING'

Raya Dunayevskaya's "Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning" (Oct. and Nov. N&L) contained the following (Hegel's words in italics): "In a word, this new beginning is both in thought and actuality, in theory and practice, that is to say, in dialectical *'mediation, which is more than a mere beginning, and is a mediation of a kind that does not belong to a comprehension by means of thinking.'*"

Comprehension by means of what, then?

What constitutes dialectical mediation? For Hegel, it was not "thinking." For Lenin, when he read Hegel's *Science of Logic*, it was not "party." Dunayevskaya, in many of her last writings, identified it as "dialectics of philosophy and organization," an "untrodden path." Her category, "Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning," was at once a new moment in Marxism and a kind of summation. It presented the dialectic as the preeminently contemporary problem.

Victor Hart
New York

The movement from practice and today's reality brings Hegel's Absolutes alive in a way that the reality of the 19th century didn't do for Marx. It doesn't just show that theory or philosophy comes from the masses, but it shows the historic role that philosophy has to play in our reality today.

Graduate student
Chicago

Raya Dunayevskaya's "Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning" reminded me that categories of thought are not separated from the day-to-day realities of unfolding history. Someone at work was saying after the elections that there's no alternative. But if you think dialectically you don't get locked into something like the two-party system—you see alternatives. When we become locked into artificial categories of thought, ideas divorced from historical reality—for example, "Free enterprise benefits all"—it is difficult to break out, to see beyond our computer terminals, State of the Union speeches and the national media. A dialectical understanding of history frees

the mind and uncovers alternatives.

The political Left is perhaps even more vulnerable to becoming locked into old categories long since changed into something else by history. I got a real sense of why the vanguard party is unworkable for Raya Dunayevskaya's Marxist-Humanism: In dialectics you've got to think for yourself. There are dogmas in the Left, but not in Dunayevskaya's writings. Marxist-Humanism sees that everyone has the capacity for thought.

George K.
Illinois

When a human being envisions freedom, there is no stop to their efforts to obtain just that. I truly believe that the role of philosophy is to find the way to help people envision freedom. The question on my mind is how these questions can be raised to people who are stuck in a mind-set because of culture, nationalism or religion? How can these questions be raised in today's society?

Latino
Los Angeles

CHALLENGING THE LEFT

Carlos Varela's letter (November N&L) on the International Socialist Organization's (ISO) "critical support" to the woman-hating terrorists of Hamas raised a good question. The ISO also offered "critical support" to the Iraqi regime during the Gulf War. Shortly after, Tony Cliff, the founder of their tendency, offered his views on Israelis and the war:

"The truth is, to get Israel involved directly would have been extremely important...But you can't get it through Scuds. At first, the impression given by the Scuds is that [the Arabs] are strong. So from the start I'm sure the Palestinians applauded. But after 37 Scuds, with only four dead, I'm sure the Palestinians are terribly disheartened. [The Scuds] didn't do anything at all." (Socialist Worker, March 1991)

This sick ventriloquism is what you're left with when you substitute intuition

for Marxist methodology, as Cliff does. Not only is it insulting to Palestinians, but it implies that Tel Aviv should have suffered the fate of Halabja. So the ISO should have no problem with Hamas' bombing of innocent people, except maybe one of scale.

Gerard Emmett
Chicago



RAYA
AND
ROSA

The question of how the male chauvinists in the German Social Democracy continually undermined Rosa Luxemburg was very solidly argued in Raya Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*. But her argument about Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks* seemed to make a lot out of what were only notebooks rather than a well-worked out argument by Marx. Nevertheless, it is intriguing that Marx was turning more, in his old age, to the study of the "Third World" societies. Dunayevskaya certainly belongs in the "women freethinkers" book on which I'm now working.

As for *News & Letters*, I like the way you have workers' correspondence and on the spot reports and that you do not "condescend" to your worker/readers, but have challenging theoretical material right along with those reports.

Fred Whitehead
Kansas

I'm sorry but I don't always read Raya's column. She was a brilliant theorist but the writing is very dry. Having said that, I always read her column when it deals with the truly great Rosa Luxemburg. It's a shame that more modern feminists aren't hailing her as the voice for 20th-century women in the industrialized world.

Reader
East Coast

WHAT IS FOUND THERE

I hope you will let Gerard Emmett know how much his review of *What Is Found There* affirmed for its author that her work is useful. Very few reviews hitherto have let me know that. (In its page of paperback reprint reviews last month the NY Times Book Review made the book sound like a self-help manual!) I felt understood in my deep intentions by Mr. Emmett, and it means a great deal to me that readers of *News & Letters* might be drawn to my book by his commentary.

The November issue is overall fascinating. You have a coverage of labor news unlike that of any paper I've seen, but this is nothing new...I was very much struck by Franklin Dmitryev's short piece on plague and the idea of white middle-class illusions of "spatial apartheid." It made me think of a recent short story by Nadine Gordimer, in which the small child of a wealthy white South African family, who have erected rolls of razor-wire on the walls of their garden against presumed Black invaders, climbs the wall and is impaled by the razor-wire.

Adrienne Rich
Santa Cruz

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

We are developing a new kind of international solidarity based on a joint organizing strategy through the "Strategic Organizing Alliance" initiated by the United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers (UE), and the Frente Autentico del Trabajo (FAT), the only independent labor federation in Mexico. Although our work has been difficult we were able to obtain the first secret ballot election in Mexican labor history. We also exposed the empty promises to protect workers' rights in NAFTA. We need further support. Please pass the word and ask your readers to let us know if they can help sponsor an organizer in Mexico.

Robin Alexander, UE
2400 Oliver Bldg.
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Black/Red View

by John Alan

Because the cardinal rule of American electoral politics is that the winner takes all the spoils of victory, the Congressional Black Caucus members will certainly be stripped of their chairmanships of the powerful committees they hold by the incoming right-wing Republican Speaker, Newt Gingrich. There is also the possibility, if the reactionaries have their way, that the Black Caucus will be abolished.

This political situation has brought African-American politics to another crossroad in its history. While this crossroad is not as great a counter-revolutionary event as the post-Reconstruction period was, when a "New South" was politically strong enough to banish African Americans from politics for many generations, it appears to be similar to those inside and outside of Congress.

For instance, Elaine R. Jones, the director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and Educational Fund, in a New York Times article, revealed that Federal courts have redrawn voting districts in Texas and in Louisiana to abolish former Black-majority districts. She points out that if this trend continues and is finally upheld by the Supreme Court, it "would purge Blacks from Southern Congressional delegations as effectively as the Plessy v. Ferguson decision of the Supreme Court's 1896 'separate but equal' ruling excluding Blacks from southern railroad cars."

However, there is a great subjective/objective difference between today and 1896. Subjectively, the maturity of the African-American masses, with their collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement, the Black mass urban revolts of the 1960s and the African Revolutions, has reached a point of comprehension which knows that freedom is a necessity of life and they have the possibility of achieving it by their own action. The Los Angeles revolt proved that this is a developing concept in the memory of African-American masses, mediated by new experiences of racial and economic alienation.

Thus objectively African-American masses know that the racist reality of this country is not merely an epithet, but is an objective force within American society which determines all African-American social, economic and political relationships within the American society.

This comprehension is inherently a negation of those relationships, including the role played by most Black leaders and intellectuals who believe that the political forms of U.S. capitalism can resolve the catastrophic problem of racism and the permanent economic crisis raging in the African-American community.

The solution is not to become apolitical, but to expose through political activity the nature of bourgeois politics as the organizer and protector of capitalism. Marx thought that this "is a political act" because it organized activity aimed at the overthrow and the dissolution of the "political hull."

These Black political and intellectual leaders have shut out of their thinking the fact that the African-American mass movement, in the words of Frantz Fanon, was an "untidy affirmation of an original idea

Iran's urban rebellions

Once again there are reports from Iran of street protests, this time in Tabriz in the province of Azerbaijan and in Ghaem-Shahr in Mazandaran. Both began as confrontations with the Islamic police forces and rapidly escalated into widespread urban rebellions. Kurdistan, a newspaper of the Kurdish movement, has called these harbingers of future rebellions. Tabriz is the largest Turkish city in Iranian Azerbaijan. It has been central to the struggle for freedom throughout the 20th century.

The Kurds, too, are still engaged in battle with the Iranian military. Iran recently bombed the headquarters of a Kurdish opposition group located 100 miles into the northern Iraqi "no fly" zone.

Meanwhile, in the working-class area of south Tehran, a bomb exploded at a busy intersection last month in the third bombing this year. With unemployment near 40% and high inflation, many are blaming the government's "free market" economic policies for their conditions. Students from University of Tehran staged a protest against "profit-mongers" last month. The students were denounced by President Rafsanjani as anti-Islamic.

These protests might explode at any moment into a popular uprising against the Islamic Republic. The Baseej, the Islamic Republic's 300,000-man anti-riot force, and the army have been combined in surrounding and quelling these protests. Recently a high ranking army brigadier wrote an open letter calling for the clerics to step aside. He has openly called for a military coup d'etat. The regime's response has been surprisingly mild. He has been put under limited house arrest, able to talk freely on the phone with reporters.

While the army's dissenters are treated with kid gloves, Iran's writers are not. An open letter by 150 writers protesting censorship and calling for freedom of the press has been denounced. Islamic police forces were assigned to all copying machines in government offices to prevent the letter from being duplicated. One writer, Saidi-Sirjani, died in late November while in custody. Saidi-Sirjani, who wrote satirical books attacking the clerics' hypocrisy, was jailed for seven months. Before his death the regime published his "confessions," mainly aimed at Iranian scholars and academics in exile.

This kind of "confession" only proves how fearful they are of the million Iranians who live abroad. Although many of those abroad limit themselves to the standpoint of a "civil society," many see the actual conditions calling for a truly new human society.

—Cyrus Noveen

Election ends Black leaders' illusions

propounded as an absolute"—an idea to create a new human society by directly challenging American civilization and its ideal political forms.

This uncritical embrace of politics by movement leaders has resulted in a discontinuity in the Black movement, that is, the vast separation between the Black masses and their erstwhile leadership who opted to play a liberal role in U.S. politics, when they realized that



Kentucky racism and unrest

Louisville, Ky.—The recent incident in Lexington, Ky., where an 18-year-old African-American male was shot by a white officer, touching off a demonstration by Blacks, is added to the long list of antagonisms and brushes with white law enforcement officers in Lexington and other cities such as Frankfort and Louisville.

Just a few days after the shooting incident in Lexington, Blacks in Louisville threatened to hold protests during the Breeder's Cup horse race at Churchill Downs in response to police harassment of young Blacks in West Louisville, a predominantly Black section.

The incident in Lexington should not surprise those of us who know the legacy of the South, and particularly of Kentucky. Kentucky was supposedly neutral in the Civil War despite a large Confederate statue standing next to the University of Louisville. But any slave caught within its borders was sent back South rather than forwarded to the North. It was also the last state to outlaw and end weekly public hangings. Noted Kentucky author Jesse Stuart has written many times of how white families would go to church on Sundays and then make their way to the center of town to witness Sunday hangings. All this occurred as a normal event, with a circus-like atmosphere and children in attendance to see the "strange fruit." Most, if not all, of these victims were Black. These actions did not end till the early 20th Century.

But this year Lexington seems to carry the banner of racism by officials and law enforcement pretty high. This past June a police vehicle was accused of hitting a 15-year-old Black male near a housing project. Two officers were slightly injured when angry residents threw various objects at the officers in retaliation. In July, the Lexington police accused over 80 blacks of assaulting a Hispanic woman. Two people were eventually charged with the crime, but only after 78 others were "cleared."

—Patrick Hunt

Gambian appeal

Banjul, The Gambia—As developments in our dear country unfold since Gambian military forces on July 22 overthrew the P.P.P. regime, military rulers are wasting no time in exposing their dictatorial tendencies. The introduction of Decree No. 4 banning all political parties and assembly came as no surprise. This is a weapon of all dictatorial regimes. It was followed by the arrest, detention and trial of some of the regime's political opponents.

The moral crusade they took upon themselves, molesting innocent Gambians by cutting their Rasta-style hair, is a clear indication that they are totally unaware of the fact that the so-called "moral degeneration" is a result of the socio-economic decadence in the country.

They promised to wipe out corruption but insist that their salaries should be kept secret. They promised to wipe out nepotism but still did not deny the claim that Susan Wafa-Ogbo, Memba Tamedu, and others have close relationships to President Jammeh—thus their appointment as ministers.

The unlawful arrest and detention of political opponents have been going on since the day of the coup. Bubacarr Senghore of Moja-G has since been released, after weeks of unlawful detention. The ongoing trial of Sedia Jatta and Halifa Sallah, charged for publishing FOROYAA newspaper, the official organ of PDOIS, is an indication that this military regime is prepared to cross any political opposition to their regime. No matter what the outcome of the trial, the military rulers should know that no dictatorship has survived the will of the people.

We call on all those in support of freedom in The Gambia to demand the immediate and unconditional release of political detainees, and the immediate repeal of Decree No. 4 and all undemocratic decrees.

Send protest letters to: The President of the Republic of The Gambia, Lt. Yaya J.J. Jammeh, President's Office, Banjul, The Gambia, West Africa.

—Committee for the Defence of Democracy in the Gambia

there wasn't going to be an automatic collapse of America's racism, and Black poverty wasn't going to disappear. Since they never understood the subjective quest of the masses for a new society, they never developed the philosophic dimension of the movement. Thus the endless activity of protest became meaningless to leaders while politics opened a door for negotiation and compromise.

The path to a new society begins with an idea. That idea in embryo is already present in the thinking of the African-American masses. The articulation and the development of that idea would be a great historical leap in African-American thought.

Boycott McClintock label

San Francisco—Hundreds rallied and marched on Nov. 19 in support of 12 immigrant women. The women were bilked out of months of pay by a contractor for Jessica McClintock two years ago and hold McClintock accountable. The "Boycott McClintock" rally, held near a McClintock boutique, was called by the Asian Immigrant Women Advocates who organized a mime for the whole crowd to perform. When they held up a sign that appears in one sweatshop—"You cannot go to the bathroom"—we all did the "pee-pee dance." Also a number of young Latinas donned anti-Proposition 187 T-shirts.

One of the immigrant women spoke in Chinese as another young woman translated: "I am one of the 12 who started the Garment Workers Justice Campaign. Who would have thought immigrant women like myself could have sparked such a nationwide movement? Two years ago we lost our jobs when Jessica McClintock ended her contract with Lucky Sewing Co. We didn't even get our \$5 out of the \$175 the dresses sell for. Last December they tried to contribute something to the workers in the form of a charitable donation. They wanted us to sign over our rights. Seven of us refused and our names were published in the Chinese language newspaper."

"Recently Jessica McClintock hired expensive lawyers to sue our campaign. They got an injunction against loud talking on the picket line. But we must tell about the conditions of women in the sweatshops. We will continue until we win our demands. It is for all immigrant women. We want McClintock to sit down and speak with the women who made her rich. We want an agreement that is fair and just. We thank all of you...and know we can count on you in this third year of the campaign."

Boycott women's apparel bearing the labels of Jessica McClintock, Scott McClintock and Gunne Sax!

—Supporter

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

pears to have turned a deaf ear to its deepening crises. Along with having not invited the RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front), the new ruling party in Kigali, Mitterrand sought to keep the corrupt Mobutu at arm's length from his African showcase. Mobutu's response was to go out of his way to make a display of his presence at the summit, and his embarrassing of Mitterrand's African policy has continued with his crackdown on France's Hutu clientele inside Zaire's borders.

More outrageous though is France's policy of steering badly needed Western aid away from the RPF while bolstering the genocidal remnants of the Habyarimana regime with humanitarian aid. France's ideological offensive to undermine the RPF demand for a war crimes tribunal (which would expose France's complicity in the Rwandan genocide and explain its tolerance for genocide closer to home, in Bosnia) has sought the reprehensible avenue of claiming a moral equivalence between "genocides," that of the Hutu regime that it continues to support and the supposed "genocide" of the RPF.

"Was there a genocide which stopped with the victory of the Tutsi?", Mitterrand had the unconscionable gall to ask at the Franco-African summit. What he meant, and what he is leading the West and the UN towards making the criterion for aid to the RPF and convening a war crimes tribunal, is that there was not only genocide on the part of the Habyarimana regime but allegedly by the RPF, thus justifying the fears of Hutu refugees in the Zaire camps about returning to their homes.

In the meantime, a well-fed Hutu army, trained by Zairean and French military advisors is amassing on the Rwanda-Zaire border for a resumption of the war. In Rwanda, as things return to normal, the cash-strapped government has received little or nothing from the UN and the West to aid its efforts to repatriate refugees, pay \$6 million in World Bank arrears, or to bring those responsible for the genocide to justice. And in the face of all this, the inept UN Security Council can only wring its hands and announce its alarm "at the indications that (the remnants of Hutu government and military) may be preparing for an armed invasion."

The Somali human rights activist and writer Rakiya Omaar, whose 900-page study entitled Rwanda: Death, Despair and Defiance has just been published by her human rights group African Rights, expresses the outrage of Africa at this Western debacle when she declares: "It's so unfair. It's so perverted. It's so disgusting. You keep searching for an explanation." While explanations are surely perverse in an age where genocide has become commonplace, it's high time that we not only explain but change this disgusting, perverted world we live in.

Cross-border solidarity builds maquiladora union

Editor's note: Aurora Pelayo is leader of the Comité Urban Popular and organizer of colonias (neighborhood associations) in Tijuana. Mary Tong is director of the Support Committee for Maquiladora Workers based in San Diego. They spoke Nov. 13 at a Los Angeles News and Letters Committee local meeting:

Aurora Pelayo: For the past 14 years I have been involved in many struggles. We have organized 12 neighborhood associations to take care of our basic needs like electricity and plumbing. Even though we do not have academic training, we are helping the workers learn how they can organize themselves.

Between 1980 and 1994 we have noticed over 500 maquiladoras (border plants) in Tijuana looking for cheap labor—in Mexico the average wage is \$5 a day. We are going through a trauma because of toxic contamination in our environment. Women, who are mothers and workers and wives, commonly experience miscarriages at three months of pregnancy. Fetuses are born deformed. We blame our government because we do have rights that are supposed to be guaranteed by the law. The worker does not count on any support from the union because it is just another structure of the government in the factory.

This year over 20 maquiladora factories have closed down. We call them "swallows" because they fly and disappear, and they take the last week's wages of workers. The worker never gets to see any kind of justice.

We have had five workshops to help workers defend their rights, and up to 19 factories involved in our workshops. In one individual factory we may have five or six workers join us.

In 1990, 5,000 families took over land that was not being used. This is an act defended in the Mexican constitution. The struggle was not so much a question of money but the strife that it took and the many *companioneros* who were killed taking over the land. We had long marches between Tijuana and Mexicali. It lasted eight days and we did it three times. The last time they would not let us pass. We confronted the governor on the free-

way. We took over the state's capitol. Now we have title to the land and we have water and electricity. But our struggle is far from over.

Sometimes my children tell me they do not want me to be involved because I can get hurt. In fact I was beaten in the face. To get a hundred of us out of the way at one point they needed 300 police. So since most of us were women they did not fight a clean fight.

The government's own data says that we have over 42 million Mexicans living in misery, such as *campesinos* in the San Quintin Valley in Baja California, as well as in Chiapas and the border of Chihuahua. Our "great" president is trying to tell the world that Mexico is wonderful. So we have a rich Mexico, rich for a few millionaires! We have asked the governor and the president to come and have dinner with us and eat the dust that we eat, so they know that there is poverty in Mexico.



Mary Tong: There are about 450 plants employing tens of thousands of women workers in and around Tijuana. In January 1993 there was flooding in Tijuana. Many workers drowned trying to get to work. At Plásticos, a U.S.-based company, workers were not allowed to work for two days for not showing up during the floods.

One of the workers, Jorge Baron, had a drill bit go into his eye. The company took nine days to give him papers to go in for treatment, so he lost his eye. Another worker, Luz Elena Corona, was pregnant and she was put on lifting boxes and was not allowed to take breaks. She be-

gan to bleed and the supervisor would not let her get off the line. So she ended up having a miscarriage right there on the assembly line.

The workers got upset and put together flyers talking about the need to organize around health and safety conditions at the plant. Twelve workers were fired for this.

The workers at Plásticos were seeking to form an independent union and we supported them. Our efforts finally ended with what was the first union election in a maquiladora in Mexico in 15 years. However, workers were not allowed to have secret ballots. They had to vote out loud with a manager standing behind a table with a pad writing down who was voting. Every time someone would vote for the independent union, a photographer would take their picture. It was a tremendously intimidating experience. Halfway through the elections the workers decided to call them off. Not only was it a farce but the only purpose it was serving was to expose everybody who was with the independent union effort.

An agreement was signed with the company that they would not retaliate against workers who had voted for the independent union and those fired would get compensation. However, each of the workers who voted for the union was forced out. They were put on jobs without breaks. Most were put into a room where you do soldering and the doors were closed so you were breathing noxious fumes with no breaks and no ventilation. Additionally, two weeks after the elections everyone who voted for the union had their pay cut by \$7 a week. That is over 10% of what they were making. All who voted for the company union had their pay increased by \$7 a week.

We are concentrating our energies in assisting the building of a maquiladora-wide worker association so that there cannot be the kind of immediate retaliation against the workers as in the case of Plásticos.

"Cross Border Organizing: A Response to NAFTA" is a video that depicts the union campaign at the Plásticos Bajacal maquiladora. It is available, for a \$15 donation, from Support Committee for Maquiladora Workers, 3909 Center St., #210, San Diego, CA 92103.

Can we stop Republican 100-day plan to roll U.S. back 50 years?

(Continued from page 1)

forth with Republican control for the first time in 40 years, of both the U.S. Senate and House.

Crowing over the victory of a slew of anti-immigrant, anti-welfare, tough-on-crime, "traditional values" candidates across the land, Republican Party ideologues lost no time in promoting their campaign for a constitutional amendment to "permit" prayer in public schools, and in floating, for serious consideration, proposals as flagrant as confiscating poor people's children and putting them in orphanages. Gingrich contrasted President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Clinton to "normal Americans" (like himself and his constituency), and Senator Jesse Helms warned that if Clinton visited any North Carolina military base "he'd better have a bodyguard."

CONTRACT 'ON' AMERICA

The agenda of the new Republican-controlled Congress centers around the so-called "Contract with America," a policy proposal drafted by Gingrich and signed by more than 300 Republican Congressional candidates before the elections. The contract lists ten major pieces of legislation that the Republicans pledge to introduce within the first 100 days of the new Congressional session: The Fiscal Responsibility Act; The Personal Responsibility Act; The Taking Back Our Streets Act; The Common Sense Legal Reform Act; The American Dream Restoration Act; and more.

Behind these catchy titles lurks a human disaster of chilling proportions. The basic program of the new Republican leadership is to drastically lower taxes for big business, toss a few crumbs of tax relief to the middle class, greatly increase military spending, shred the heart of social programs, and build, prisons, prisons, prisons.

President Clinton's response was to virtually prostrate himself before the incoming Republicans on everything from welfare reform to immigration to school prayer. By December, the Clinton administration had announced policy initiatives that ranged from an end to the protected immigration status of Salvadoran refugees to a proposal to increase military spending by \$25 billion over the next six years.

Meanwhile, key Republican leaders, pushing their advantage, discussed the following elements as part of a "welfare reform" package:

- Reducing the federal budget allotment for assistance to the poor by some \$57 billion over four years.
- Denying any public assistance to unmarried teen mothers and their babies.
- Cutting off AFDC recipients after two years with no job guarantee or safety net other than those orphanages for the children.
- Compelling welfare recipients to work for less than minimum wage.
- Denying government aid to "legal" as well as "illegal" immigrants.
- Repealing the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983, the Food Stamp Act of 1977, the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, and the National School Lunch Act of 1946.

"It's like they want us to dry up and die," one welfare mother told *News & Letters*. "If you're a poor, unmarried woman with children—everything is your fault. And it felt this way even before the elections. Now how much

clearer can they make their agenda? They have criminalized being poor."

The mainstream media trumpeted the electoral results as a clear popular mandate for just such a right-wing program, but the facts are considerably murkier. Less than 39% of eligible voters cast their ballots, and of these, just over 50% voted Republican. The Republican "mandate" was the voice of no more than one in five adult citizens.

ELECTIONS, VOTERS, AND THE MOVEMENT

Some 100 million Americans abstained from voting altogether, finding no voice in either Republican candidates or Democrats who tried to portray themselves as tougher—on crime, immigration, the "undeserving poor"—than their opponents. As one struggling African-American mother said, "Which snake in the grass are you supposed to choose?"

In response, Los Angeles saw its largest political demonstration in several decades, Oct. 16, when 100,000 immigrants and their supporters demanded: "No on 187!" "Illegal" workers asserted their humanity and proclaimed the truth of their existence and labor, carrying placards that read: "These hands grow your food"; "These hands sew your clothes"; "These hands care for your children."

Tens of thousands of Latino high school and middle school students throughout California mounted walkouts, rallies, sit-ins, decrying the fact that their lives and futures were in jeopardy: "Our dream is to go to school and be somebody in life, and if this law passes we won't be able to fulfill our dreams"; "We didn't realize that society would turn on us!"

In the Los Angeles area, hundreds of students organized walkouts on Oct. 20; thousands quit classes to march in protest on Oct. 28; and more than 10,000 left school to convene on government offices on Nov. 3. (For more student protests, see page 11.)

On election night, as polling results came in and Prop. 187's passage became certain, a Los Angeles television journalist reporting live from the local headquarters of the "No on 187" campaign noted in astonishment that the mood there was energetic and upbeat. Turning to an organizer for explanation, he was told: "We have only just begun. A whole new movement has been born."

ONCE AGAIN: IT'S THE ECONOMY

And yet that spirit of a new upsurge faltered over the next few days as the harsh reality of retrogression nationally seeped into the stunned consciousness of millions. The white/Anglo electorate in California voted for Prop. 187 by a 63% to 37% margin. The African-American vote was against, but narrowly, 53% to 47%; and in the Latino community a not-unsubstantial 23% voted for the measure. Amongst Blacks and Latinos who voted for the proposition, the reasoning they gave was largely straightforward: concern that undocumented workers are monopolizing unskilled jobs and depressing wages in a period of economic recession.

This was precisely the argument pushed in these communities by the organizers for the proposition in a historic replay of an ideological strategy birthed and rebirthed in periods of economic crisis: Take the focus off the larger, structural causes of the crisis by placing the blame on a vulnerable "Other."

In the U.S. racism has ever been the added, potent poison in that scapegoating, "divide-and-rule" brew. And so it is today, with anti-Latino racism played strong in Anglo—and also Black—communities as the reason to pass Prop. 187, and with anti-Black racism lurking as the "code" within the punitive hysteria laying out simplistic "solutions" to the dilemmas of welfare and crime.

THE BIG PICTURE

By a twist of historic fate, Nov. 9, the day after the elections, also marked the anniversary of "Kristallnacht," "the night of the shattered glass" when, in 1938, Nazi thugs burned and trashed Jewish homes and businesses throughout Germany and Austria, scapegoating the Jewish "race" for the drastic decline in the German economy and national prestige.

That evening, at twilight, some 200 activists gathered in downtown Los Angeles for a vigil, holding candles and piercing the air with their call: "No human being is illegal!" A rabbi explicitly drew the parallel between Kristallnacht and Prop. 187, denouncing the latter both for its attempt to blame undocumented immigrants for California's deep-rooted economic problems, and for its ominous creation of a class of "Other," "alien" beings stigmatized as less than fully human.

The danger of the current historic moment is that it is the right-wing ideologues who have seized the initiative in articulating a comprehensive perspective in response to the prevailing economic and human crises.

The one element of truth within the Republican challenge is that "big government" is not the "answer" to today's economic and human crises. In 1992, the negative impact of Reaganism had become so obvious that even a significant section of the white middle class was willing to go for Clinton and the Democratic Party for a "breathing space." But Clinton could offer nothing but a strengthened version of state-capitalism, at the very moment when the crisis of state-capitalism had become so deep that the system was left without any means to provide the promised reforms as with health care.

The fact that there is no forceful presence of a social perspective articulating a terrain beyond free-market and statist capitalism gives ground to the right-wing to present itself as the "alternative" and savior. To achieve that end Gingrich is compelled to attempt to bury the remains of what he labels the "Great Society, counterculture, McGovern" legacy and return U.S. to the "honesty and work ethic" of the pre-1960s.

In 1992 the rulers had a reminder of how profound social discontent could arise once again when Los Angeles exploded in rebellion and sparked eruptions all across the country. Most frightening to those in power were the joint actions in L.A. by Black and Latino; the effort to divide these two groups has been concerted and somewhat successful ever since.

The void in the articulation of a liberatory alternative to capitalism is a palpable reality; to fill that void is the most urgent need. The task is to articulate a vision that speaks to the underlying discontent and humanism throughout this land and so concretely work out the interplay between that vision and the Reason of the human forces wanting change that a wide, deep, complex, continually evolving freedom movement comes to be.

Essay Article

by Ron Brokmeyer

"All over the globe...workers and managers alike wonder if we are heading toward a world in which half the population is permanently overworked and the other half permanently unemployed," writes *Business Week* (Oct. 17, 1994). Why, in spite of this dismal vision of the future under capitalism, is there a collapse of ideas projecting any different future?

Marx forecast the horrors of today's immediate conditions in his greatest theoretical work, *Capital*, as he worked out the logic of its anti-human direction. So why is Marx's vision of the future, his re-creation of what Hegel called the "realm of subjectivity or freedom," so unexplored today?

Not even the depth of the world economic crisis seems to shake capitalism's religious faith in the commodity as today's global determinant. However, acknowledging the depth of the crisis is not enough to find a way out of it. This is especially so if one's view is limited to looking "behind" the movement of commodities as it is reflected in all of the economy's indicators. Limiting our vision to merely a look "behind" only reinforces the fetishistic attitude that presupposes the movement of commodities as autonomous objects.¹

What is found "behind" the movement is actually something "in" commodities that Marx claims no chemist will ever detect (p. 177). What is found "in" commodities is an amount of labor time. In today's jargon this means that "productivity" is the mother of all factors determining whether a commodity-producing organization or nation survives.²

While there is no such tangible thing as an amount of labor time, the material embodiment of commodities is made into a pure abstraction through the commodity-form, that is, through a certain mental posture that makes something objective into a pure abstraction. For Marx, this mental posture is an "integument" that gets "burst asunder" (p. 929). It constitutes for capitalist commodity culture what Hegel called, in *The Phenomenology of Mind*, a "shriveling skin" of the mind.³ Without shedding it, there is no growth; you suffocate.

As today's global economic crisis pulls the material foundations out from under more and more people, such ghosts from the past as fascism, tribalism, and "traditional values" are thrown up as the ideological glue to hold civil society intact. The constant dissolution of everything solid in social forms reveals that "behind" the commodity-form is absolutely nothing.

For Marx, the commodity-form is a form of spirit, or, as he put it in *Capital*, a *gestalt* which is a shape of consciousness that is one with its content. Hegel's dialectic of Essence, where he counterposes Form and Content and Form and Matter, gets transcended through Marx's re-creation of Hegel's dialectic of the Notion, or what he called "the realm of freedom or subjectivity," in Marx's theory of the fetishism of commodities. To get a closer look at this, we will have to explore further the relationship between Marx's discussion of fetishism and the Hegelian dialectic.

I. Hegel's 'Self-Estranged Spirit' and the Fetishism of Commodities

The commodity-form, and the value-relation of the products of labor within which it appears, have absolutely no connection with the physical nature of the commodity and the material relations arising out of this.

—Marx, *Capital*, Chapter 1

The fetishism of commodities appears to be a re-creation of Hegel's description of the emergent bourgeois consciousness found in the "Spirit in Self-Estrangement" section of his *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Specifically, Hegel's treatment of the discipline of culture, as the absolute-inversion and estrangement of thought and reality (p. 541), is made concrete for capitalist commodity culture.

What Hegel is tracing in "Spirit in Self-Estrangement" is how the self gains an objective existence through relinquishing itself to its own external reality. Lacking a substance of its own, its substance is to be found in its act of relinquishment. Hegel describes this as a doubly atomistic moment in which the individual becomes "absolutely insular, absolutely discrete" as it confronts an alienating reality of its own making, whose "form...is just as impenetrable as itself" (p. 509).

Marx poses a similar problem when he writes of "private individuals who work independently of each other" (p. 165), and who are related through a social relationship between things of their own creation. "Products of the human brain appear as autonomous figures endowed with a life of their own" (p. 165). Thus, individuals in capitalist society have no substance of their own which they do not in some way relinquish to the universal substance in things, in the form of the amount of labor time expended in their creation. It is through this universal substance that commodities relate to each other.

The individual, Hegel shows, nevertheless revolts against this self-repudiation. "What exists as a self on its account," he writes, "has for its object its own self-existence, which is object in the sense of an absolute other, and yet at the same time directly in the form of itself" (p. 541). This object, however, is "not a natural self-less object...[it is] not like a power of an inorganic element which is felt by consciousness receiving its force to be inherently transitory; it is the power over self" (p. 539). It is a social power congealed in objects and dispensed as wealth. In today's ongoing rhetorical and material wars against the poor, this social power assumes the arro-

Commodity fetishism and today's capitalist crisis as Marx foresaw it



gance of a state power and wealth which "overlooks the secret rebellion of the other...overlooks the fact of all bonds being completely cast aside, overlooks this pure disintegration, in which...the repute and respect for the benefactor are the first to be shattered" (p. 539).

Marx, for his part, identifies the social substance, the congealed social "power over self," in the value form of the commodity, i.e., labor time, or labor as pure quantity, without regard for the form of its expenditure. If the commodity could speak, Marx argues, it would say: "Our use-value may interest men, but it does not belong to us as objects. What does belong to us as objects, however, is our value." Then he points to how this view emerges from economists who say that "value...is a property of things...Riches...are the attributes of man" (pp. 176-77).

Though the commodity is taken as real and objective, as a value it is a bare thought, a bare nothing. As an object whose concrete physical nature and riches are inseparable from the human activity out of which it ushered, the commodity is taken to be subjective and unessential. Both Marx and Hegel are engaged in looking for paths out of this anomaly of self-created nothingness that generates our atomistic existence.

One of the results of Hegel's dialectic of self-estranged spirit is the creation of a recognized objective form of spirit in which everything solid undergoes "dissolution." Spirit cannot, at this point, go back to some imagined "natural state of innocence," but must as "spirit return out of its confusion into self, and win for itself a still higher level of conscious life" (p. 546). What became transparent for Marx is that the constant dissolution of the seemingly solid social forms of capitalism's commodity culture made it impossible to find a better future by going back to something like the "worship of nature" or "the immaturity of man as an individual" (p. 173). The only pathway out, in his view, is for workers, freely associated, to take responsibility for the objective spiritual existence that shapes material life.

Although Marx believed that only freely associated labor can strip away the fetish, that statement, too, becomes an empty result unless one grasps the principle that drove Marx to pose the problem in terms of two conceptual moments of organization, namely, commodity fetishism versus freely associated labor.

Marx's driving principle against the commodity-form is thought's power of the negative which he calls the "power of abstraction" (p. 90), and through which thought comprehends the positive that emerges out of the negation of capitalism's "economic cell form." As a self-developing totality "the object as a whole," writes Hegel in the *Phenomenology*, is a movement of Universal, Particular and Individual. It "is the mediated result or the passing of universality into individuality through specification, as also the reverse process from the individual to the universal through cancelled individuality or specific determination" (p. 790).

Capital is based on the second movement, or the movement from "the special to the general."⁴ Marx begins with the individual commodity's dual nature (use-value and exchange value), which reflects the dual nature of the labor, as concrete and abstract. Thus, the individual embodies both concrete and abstract (purely quantitative) labor, though only the latter, alienated labor, makes up the individuality of the commodity-form.

II. Marx's and Hegel's Notions Contrasted

When the narrow bourgeois form has been peeled away, what is wealth if not...the evolution of all human powers as...an end in itself...a situation where man does not reproduce himself in any determined form, but produces his totality? Where he does not seek to remain something formed by the past, but is in the absolute movement of becoming?

—Marx, *Grundrisse*

The movement of the "object as a whole," in Hegel, is through the negation of the negation. It represents humanity's return to itself out of its externalized objective spirit. In Marx's terms, this means that the relation of the individual to the whole of capitalist society reflects the spiritual form of the commodity (the commodity-form), as a form of externalization in which the return to self does not confirm the individual's true essence as his/her subjective capacities. This confirmation is a necessary moment of Marx's dialectical negation of the

negation, but not of Hegel's. In capitalist society, externalization appears, for Marx, in the form of the commodity production process. Therein Marx found not confirmation but absolutely nothing: "The commodity-form...[has] absolutely no connection with the physical nature of the commodity and the material relations arising out of this" (p. 165).

The *gestalt* of the "social life-process" dictates a greater and greater divergence between material existence and any human dimension. The ultimate is reached in the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation as the ever-growing army of the unemployed. The whole history of revolt against capitalism is the history of the re-emergence of the human dimension in the face of a totally detached concept of objectivity.

The retrogression in today's thought makes it imperative to face directly capitalism's concept of objectivity, which is inverted into something outside the concrete activity of the whole human being. This crisis of mind makes philosophy itself objective and demands we confront Marx's view of capitalism's absolute inversion and estrangement of thought and reality.

A problem Marx saw with Hegel's negation of the negation, as Marx expressed it in his original 1844 *Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic*, was that it united the roles of negation and preservation of externalization. For Marx the return to self out of externalization was always a confirmation of true human essence but that confirmation was "through negation of apparent essence."⁵ Only if that negation is total, i.e., not still determined by what it opposes (as in the case of atheism or collective property), could there be "positive humanism beginning from itself" (p. 320).

Hegel's dialectic combined the roles of negation and preservation because "knowledge is its single objective relation" (p. 316). Otherness for Hegel is something consciousness poses for itself. Marx's concept of objectivity includes human activity, which means the whole human being, a unity of consciousness and doing which is itself a dimension of nature. In the face of the nothingness of capitalism's externalized individuality, the commodity-form, Marx's negation of the negation turns on the destruction of this "alienated determination of the objective world" (p. 319).

Marx's movement from the "specific to the general" is a total negation whose positive content is the idea of freely associated labor creating a whole new social individual and a new concept of objectivity which is the Marxian dialectic. I say "idea" of freely associated labor because Marx in *Capital* formulated it before the Paris Commune became that idea for him in real life. The power of the "idea" of freely associated labor emerges in opposition to the absurd reality of human relations as "social relations between things" (p. 166).

Without grasping the absolute nothingness of the commodity-form, without grasping just this, there is no way for the positive to emerge from the negative. There is no way for the perennial drive for free association to recognize itself as the absolute opposite of commodity production with which it cannot possibly coexist. There is no way to coexist and avoid being pulled into the vortex of the world market.

In Hegel, the movements of the whole "determine the ways in which consciousness must know the object as itself" (p. 790). In Marx, this self-recognition is a return to self that can amplify the meaning of the emergence of new forms of association in actual history. Self-recognition transforms the very meaning of totality. By totally clearing the decks, and removing any residue of an independent actuality that confronts the subject in its passage to freedom, totality can become a new beginning.

Marx considered the greatest achievement of the Paris Commune to be the "working existence" of such a form, needing only "to set free the elements of the new society."⁶ Freely associated labor is a new objective form of spirit that can take responsibility for the spiritual existence that shapes material life. But in its full development it is also the total individual, i.e., "the all-round development of the individual" realized through overcoming the "enslaving subordination of the individual to the division...between mental and manual labor...[where] labor has become not only a means to life but life's prime want."⁷

Marx's concept of objectivity as becoming is the ongoing objective realization of subjective human capacities in a new fully developed social individual. This is the sense in which the movement of becoming, in Marx, out of the being and non-being of self-estranged spirit, is one in which "man does not reproduce himself in any determined form, but produces his totality."

1. See Karl Marx, *Capital*, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin, 1976), p. 167. Further page references are in the text.

2. Peter F. Drucker, *Post-Capitalist Society* (New York: Harper Business, 1993). See my review of this work, "Fetishism of Capitalist Knowledge," *News & Letters*, July 1993.

3. G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. J.B. Baillie (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 565. Further page references are in the text.

4. See Karl Marx, *Critique of Political Economy* (Chicago: Kerr, 1904), p. 9.

5. See Marx's *Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic*, as translated by Raya Dunayevskaya in *Marxism and Freedom* (New York: Bookman, 1958), p. 317. Further page references in the text are to this translation.

6. See Marx's *The Civil War in France*, in *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 339.

7. See Marx's "Critique of the Gotha Program" in *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 87.

Burma students refuse to be crushed

Chicago—Escaped Burma student activist Yuzana Khin made two appearances at Loyola University, bearing witness to the power of the student-led mass movement begun in 1988 that yet refuses to be crushed. In talks and a dramatic performance she re-created the basis for today's ongoing resistance in marches unfolding over months even after repeated bloody repression.

After a currency devaluation, when people could not even afford to buy food, students began marches in 1988 against the military government which since 1962 had gagged Burma under the banner of the "Burmese Way To Socialism." In spite of arrests, killings and rapes of female students, students from all over, including minority areas in Upper Burma, gathered in Rangoon for two days of demonstrations "till the government falls."

But when soldiers obeyed orders to shoot, only the fortunate escaped. From a hiding place, Yuzana Khin later saw truckloads of students driven away who were not seen again. She called it Tiananmen Square without the television cameras and foreign journalists.

Despite terror and two weeks of curfew, crowds from all Burma gathered to hear Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of the national hero of the eviction of British and Japanese colonialism from Burma, identify herself with the movement for human rights and democracy and call it the second struggle for national independence.

Founding the All-Burma Student Union, which elected as treasurer Yuzana Khin, its one woman leader, led to renewed daily demonstrations, with some soldiers joining workers, students and even farmers at least until the even harsher repression of the State Law and Order Restoration Council from Sept. 18.

Six years later, surviving demonstrators are in hiding in areas of Karen and Mon resistance, some of whom have been fighting for land, language and culture for 40 years. Others are in exile in Thailand and elsewhere. But Burma is not at peace. Families of exiles have even had to disown their own kin or be punished themselves.

The regime is propped up solely by loyal military units, supported by China's billion dollar military aid and by selling the country off. Wealth from clearing rainforest timber or pumping oil—and bloodily evicting Karen peoples to build the pipeline—or any investment is funneled to the military. Yuzana Khin asked for grass roots support for the boycott of Western investors in Burma on the model of the divestment movement against apartheid South Africa.

We were told that Amoco and Liz Claiborne, for in-

stance, withdrew after boycotts began. Unocal and Texaco are still there, but the primary target is PepsiCo.

In working out questions of freedom, today's revolutionaries are building on the legacy of what developed throughout 1988. The presence of Mon and Karen members of the government in exile in Thailand recalls movements and organizations that had begun to cross ethnic and geographic lines. And on the roles of men and women, could women students who had risked rape and death in daily demonstrations accept being told to act more like Burmese 'women' within the movement?

—Bob McGuire

Youth in California fight Proposition 187

San Jose, Cal.—Thousands of youth walked out of school the day after Proposition 187, the infamous "Save Our State" initiative, passed. Protests and marches were held throughout the day as students from all the local high schools, most junior highs and even some elementary schools walked out. By mid afternoon, Cesar Chavez Plaza was full of young people protesting the anti-immigrant SOS initiative.

One 14-year-old from Pioneer High School carrying a sign that read "Todos somos ilegales!" [We are all illegals!] said that "The grown-ups, MEChA and organizers from the church tried to limit this all to voting. But even if 187 hadn't passed, Wilson would have found another way to put it in effect. We can't let the grown-ups limit us all to just a movement. It's more than that. It's our rights just to live and survive."

"I can't stop and say that this is a done deal because I see the future and what I see is that it is just getting worse for my people. There is no choice for us but to come together and fight. The people that have papers want to distance us and say that they are only fighting 187 because it will make them get discriminated against. But what about my sisters and brothers who are still new to here? It's them that we have to fight for."

A 13-year-old woman from Foundry High School holding a banner that read "Aquí estamos! Aquí nos quedamos! No nos vamos!" [Here we are! Here we stay! We will not leave!] said that the immigration "problem" is not really about "illegals" using up resources: "The United States comes into countries and takes our land, our people, our natural gas, oil, whatever they can get their hands on. The U.S. only has a small percentage of the people in this world, yet they use almost all the re-

"The idea of a Marxist-Humanist paper, beginning publication June 1955 when McCarthyism was still raging, seems, strangely enough, very todayish. The idea of a struggle for freedom that would make inseparable theory and practice, and have that relation as the determinant, does indeed remain an imperative."

— RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

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sources. How dare they call us wetbacks, say that we are coming in to get their welfare and schools?! At least in Mexico City they had textbooks for all the students."

"Deport Wilson" read the sign of a 16-year-old Asian woman who said, "The media is all blaming us for having walkouts, saying that we distanced the middle class by being too out there. They say that if we hadn't walked out in L.A., blocked the San Mateo bridge, or torn apart a McDonald's in Mexico City, that if we had quietly asked for our rights as people, that we would have been given them. That's bullshit! Even in our own organizations, people I thought were on our side are saying we have to 'peacefully mourn' the passage of 187."

Not all the high schools made it to Cesar Chavez Plaza. Overfield High and Lincoln High School were both surrounded by police when students tried to walk out. At Overfield, all the gates, even emergency fire gates, were locked. Students waited two hours for the police to leave and then walked out through a hole in the fence.

—Lynn

'Balkanizing' the schools

Chicago—Republicans who have just won a majority in the Illinois General Assembly have launched a new attack on the students and teachers in Chicago's public schools with an absurd plan to divide the school system into eight districts, each with their own school board. Governor Edgar is seriously considering it as a way to "solve" the \$290-million deficit.

The proposal is to divide the system up along the lines of the old township boundaries which are currently only used in the tax assessment process. One legislator said in a television interview that the funding for each district would be based on the "tax base of each community." In the impoverished Black neighborhood on the West Side where I teach, the teachers interpret this as a cruel joke or a recipe for doomsday.

The district in the downtown area would be the richest in the country. In other parts of the city the schools are already so poorly funded that only a modern day Charles Dickens could imagine the chaos and squalor that would reign after this plan took effect.

Of course, the union contract would be thrown out, and teachers in each district would have to reorganize a new union and negotiate new contracts.

It was not until I had a discussion with some teachers in training at Columbia College that I understood why both the union representative and the administrator who denounced the plan at my school prefaced their remarks by saying "This plan might sound good, but...." These young teachers said that they were so sick of the Board of Education that they did not care about funding or the union. They just wanted to see the bureaucracy broken up. A Black woman said she was all for it because "the school board of a predominantly Black district wouldn't have to teach European studies at all."

The Republicans are packaging this blatantly racist measure as a battle against big government and for greater community control, and ironically it is gaining the support of some of the same Afrocentric people who believe that Black children are being poorly educated because of "a conspiracy to destroy Black boys." Others, however, are calling this the "Balkanization of the Chicago Public Schools." —Disgusted teacher-in-training

Centennial of neglected *Capital*, Volume III

This month marks the 100th anniversary of the third volume of *Capital*, Karl Marx's greatest work. It was edited and published after his death by Frederick Engels, on the basis of the manuscripts Marx had left.

Volume I continues to be studied widely by working people and students. Volume II's analysis of capitalist accumulation was the pivot upon which revolutionary perspectives were debated within pre-World War I Marxism, and it remains crucial to the critique of underconsumptionism. Yet Volume III has always received far less attention, except among a handful of academic economists.

Ironically, the economists themselves have helped make Volume III obscure by treating it in isolation from the rest of *Capital*. Because it deals with the same subject-matter that academic economists and the business press do—the forms of the movement of capital as they "appear on the surface of society" (p. 117)*—the economists, radical as well as mainstream, turn to Volume III as they try to read Marx as another "economist" and to "apply" his categories.

DISTORTING MARX'S VISION

However, the wrenching of Volume III out of the totality of *Capital* (and Marx's work as a whole) so distorts his thought that it turns him not only into an economist, but into a seriously flawed one. The major interests of economists in Volume III, especially since the 1970s, has been to expose its alleged "logical contradictions" which stem from their own peculiar separation of the appearances explored in Volume III from the essence, capitalist production, studied in Volume I.

Pervading all of Volume III is the exact opposite notion, namely that the surface phenomena of economics are forms in which the perverted human relations of capitalist production do make their appearance:

"[T]he way that surplus-value is transformed into the form of profit, by way of the rate of profit, is only a further extension of that inversion of subject and object which already occurs in the course of the production process itself.... Value, i.e., the past labor that dominates living labor is personified into the capitalist; on the other hand, the worker conversely appears as mere objectified labor-power, as a commodity. This inverted relationship necessarily gives rise [to] a transposed consciousness, which is further developed by the transformations and modifications of the circulation process proper" (p. 136).

ALL FROM SURPLUS-LABOR

As Marx painstakingly develops these "transformations," the incomes of the capitalist class—industrial profit, merchant profit, dividends, interest, rent, etc.—are shown to derive solely from the surplus-labor pumped out of workers in capitalist production. Competition, scandals, and swindles merely determine who, and which class fraction, will get a bigger share and which a smaller one. It is thus in Volume III that Marx reaffirms that "[t]he specific economic form in which unpaid surplus labour is pumped out of the direct producers determines the relationship of domination and servitude [and

is] the hidden basis of the entire social edifice." (p. 927).

Marx's aim, however, is not to dismiss the appearances in the market as inessential. On the contrary, it is in the market that the contradictions of capitalist production are expressed most fully. The contradictory character of the commodity-form (material form and value form) appears innocuous enough in Chapter 1 of the first volume: "an increase in the amount of material wealth may correspond to a simultaneous fall in the magnitude of its value. This contradictory movement arises out of the twofold character of labor" (pp. 136-37). Yet this very same contradictory movement, when manifested in the market, gives rise to the falling tendency of the rate of profit—and to the crises of devaluation, the real form in which this contradiction is "resolved."

Reading these sections makes one appreciate Marx's foresight, his ability to speak to realities we face more than a century later as we endure the third decade of a global economic crisis. This foresight, mystified when explained by reference to his "genius" of "prophetic" quality, is rather a matter of method, as Raya Dunayevskaya argued in *Marxism and Freedom*: "his dialectical method of tracing through to the end all trends of social development" (p. 22). In each volume of *Capital*, Marx draws out capital's developmental tendencies to the fullest.

TAKING IT TO THE LIMIT

In Volume I, he takes centralization and concentration to its limit: "a single capitalist or a single capitalist company" (p. 779). In Volume II, the simplification of class antagonisms is formalized into schema of a closed capitalist society composed of capitalists and workers only. In Volume III, it is the antagonism of use-value and value that is taken to its limit; precisely because machine-dominated production is responsible for the phenomenal growth of use-value productivity, value production is doomed: To maintain the old rate of profit in the face of a decline in the living labor that produces value, "the surplus-labor time would have to increase ... and very soon ... even the full twenty-four hours of the day would not be sufficient, even if it were entirely appropriated by capital" (p. 523).

Capital, Volume III thus discloses that, in confining human development by making human beings "useful" only insofar as they serve this "restricted end, the valorization of the existing capital" (p. 359), capitalist society is unviable. It is hence no accident that this volume is the one in which Marx projects the absolute opposite, "[t]he true realm of freedom, the development of human powers as an end in itself" (p. 959).

In the past century, we have endured unprecedented terror and barbarism, an unprecedented sacrifice of human life to senseless, inhuman ends. The Humanism of Marx's vision, particularly its articulation of the inseparability of means and ends, remains in urgent need of concretization.

—Andrew Kliman

* References to all volumes of *Capital* are to the Penguin/Vintage edition.

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Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The November clashes on the Gaza Strip between Yasir Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the fundamentalist movement Islamic Jihad left 14 dead and 200 wounded, as PLO police answered volleys of rocks with live ammunition. The fundamentalists had gathered to protest the jailing of some of their activists by the PLO police in the wake of an Islamic Jihad terrorist attack on an Israeli army post. When the fundamentalists defied orders to disperse, the PLO police began what turned into a massacre.

The result was a day of anti-Arafat riots in Gaza with not only Islamic Jihad supporters, but also followers of the far larger Hamas fundamentalist group taking to the streets. Slogans shouted by the crowds included: "Arafat is a dog. A slave of [Israeli Prime Minister] Rabin and the Americans. He will end up like [assassinated Egyptian President] Sadat." Only after Hamas leaders called for calm did the crowds disperse.

This, the first serious bloodshed between Palestinian

factions since the peace agreement, only seemed to weaken further Arafat's already shaky position. Arafat's "explanation" of the violence caused still more outrage when he suggested that Israeli infiltrators had really pulled the trigger.

The PLO's other response was more muscular. His forces rearmed the Fatah Hawks, an underground guerrilla group from Arafat's PLO faction set up during the Intifada days. They and other PLO supporters then demonstrated, 10,000 strong. Brandishing weapons, they chanted: "Whoever wrongs Fatah, Fatah will open his head." Such "arguments" will hardly undercut the new support going to Hamas, especially since Hamas has adopted (for now) a line of non-confrontational protest against Arafat plus calls for both Palestinian "unity" and an investigation and punishment of the police who opened fire.

A number of factors are causing fundamentalism to grow inside the Palestinian movement. One of them is Arafat's ineptitude and authoritarianism, factors which have lost him the support of key secular intellectuals and

politicians. Always closer to Arab kings, sheiks and dictators than to his own masses, Arafat's political "role models" are probably authoritarian Arab leaders such as Egypt's Hosni Mubarak.

A second factor is that little has changed for the Palestinian masses since the peace accords. Elections have been delayed by Israel, which continues to imprison thousands of Palestinian activists. Israel has also closed off Gaza in response to fundamentalist terrorist attacks, causing unemployment there to rise to a catastrophic 50%. After events such as last February's massacre of Arab worshipers in Hebron by a Jewish fanatic, and Israel's recent deal with Jordan behind the backs of the PLO, it is not surprising that rejectionist sentiment has grown among the Palestinian masses.

A third factor is that less than 10% of the \$2.4 billion promised in reconstruction aid by the U.S., Europe, Japan and wealthy Arab states has actually arrived. Belatedly, Israel seemed to move a bit on implementing elections on the West Bank, and some aid money was suddenly freed up by outside donors. But it is very unclear if real peace is still possible.

Increasingly, the situation seems to be heading toward that found elsewhere in the Arab world. There, corrupt and authoritarian but nominally secular governments such as Egypt's face strong challenges from Islamic fundamentalist movements, in part because the fundamentalists have succeeded in presenting themselves as the only alternative to the given state of affairs.

East Timorese protests challenge APEC

The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) group of 18 nations came to a "consensus" on Nov. 15 that by the year 2020 they would all meet the goal of "free and open trade and investment." Held in a colonial-era palace outside Jakarta, Indonesia, representatives included rulers from U.S. President Clinton to the Sultan of Brunei. They agreed to a free-trade plan for what would become the world's largest free-trade zone, encompassing \$1.7 trillion of its exports and half of its capitalist economic output. Members include Japan, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and other Asian countries, as well as the U.S., Canada, Australia, Mexico and Chile.

While the year 2020 seemed abstractly safe and distant, East Timorese students brought in the world of here and now by defying stringent pre-conference security, scaling the walls of the U.S. embassy and occupying its parking lot. They called for the release of Jose Alexandre Gusmao, a leader of the Timorese independence movement, and a meeting with Clinton. More than 200,000 East Timorese people—over one-third of the entire population—have died under Indonesian occupation since their country was invaded and annexed after declaring independence in 1975. The students' demonstrations also marked the third anniversary of the November 1991 Indonesian massacre of over 200 Timorese protesters in Dili.

The Clinton entourage gave lip service to the issues raised by East Timorese and others in Indonesia, but it had already cast its mold by the earlier agreement to grant China "most favored nation" trade status by "delinking" human rights from economic deals. The U.S. now calls this "commercial diplomacy," which means separating capitalistic growth from the only source which can make it grow—workers. The hot-house expansion of Asian economies is based first and foremost on the exploitation of labor—peasants, especially women, driven into factories, child labor, dismal working and living conditions, and the repression of any independent organizing.

The APEC host country, Indonesia, is a clear micro-

cosm of this development. Suharto, sustained by the military, has ruled with an iron fist since coming to power in one of the bloodiest coups ever in 1965. Before the APEC summit, his regime silenced the press and swept the streets of political dissidents and labor activists. The Jakarta military chief vowed he would "cut to pieces" any protesters.

The Indonesian rulers are still trying to suppress reverberations from huge strikes and demonstrations by



East Timorese student protesters occupy U.S. Embassy grounds in Indonesia.

over 20,000 workers in Medan last April. They were demanding enforcement of the minimum wage (\$1.75 a day, hardly enough to feed one person), an end to forced overtime, as well as the right to organize. Muchtar Pakpahan and others who have led the movement for an independent union, the Union for Workers Prosperity (SBSI), have been tried, sentenced and jailed for their part in the strikes. But no amount of repression has stopped the continuous organizing and protest meetings by workers. As late as October, one month before APEC, over 4,000 workers struck an Adidas shoe factory near Jakarta.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding in 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophical ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her recreation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

Deadly Russian oil spill

Decaying oil pipelines in the Russian Arctic region around Usinsk have created an environmental disaster of huge proportions. Dikes built to retain the leaking oil burst after heavy rains in the early fall, spilling up to 90 million barrels of crude oil onto the fragile tundra permafrost and into nearby rivers. This disaster dwarfs the Exxon Valdez and lesser oil spills.

The crisis was not made public by Russian authorities until well over a month had passed. The oil has contaminated a large expanse, destroying fish and livestock as well as the land itself. In some areas where it has pooled, the oil has ignited and burned. A local environmental activist (which equals "dissident" in Usinsk which is dependent on the oil industry) recorded over 600 accidents in one year on the same pipeline as recently as 1991. Russia has based a crucial amount of its economy on oil, but has no capital to put into repairing its decrepit oil and natural gas infrastructure.

Some observers said oil continued to be pumped full tilt through the leaking pipeline system well over a week after it had begun to gush. Meanwhile, Russia has received very little aid to clean up from the international capitalist community, which is more concerned with how to exploit its gas and oil reserves.

Berber revolt in Algeria

The war between the Army and the Islamic fundamentalists has by now claimed over 20,000 lives in Algeria with no end in sight. Left, democratic and secular forces have had great difficulty in putting forth a third way, a genuine alternative. One possible base of support for such an alternative is Algeria's eight-million-strong Berber community, which has been a center of anti-fundamentalist sentiment. It reacted with fury when one of its most celebrated cultural figures, the singer Matoub Lounes, was kidnapped by fundamentalists in late September. In response, the leadership of the broad-based Berber Cultural Movement threatened "total war" against the fundamentalists if Lounes was not freed.

A few days later, another popular Berber singer, Cheb Hasni, was shot to death. More than 100,000 demonstrated in Tizi-Ouzou, a center of Berber culture. They came out strongly against fundamentalism and for official recognition of the Berber language, Tamazirt. A week later, Lounes was freed by his captors.

The Berber region, which includes the Kabyle mountains, was an important base of support during the revolutionary war of independence against France, 1954-62. But soon after independence was won, the leadership of the National Liberation Front declared "Arabization" to be its goal, which did not include recognition of Tamazirt.

Since then, the Berber community has produced a number of leftist opposition organizations. Islamic fundamentalism has not made many inroads into Kabylia in part because Berbers, although themselves predominantly Muslim, sense that the fundamentalists want to impose an extremely narrow version of Arabo-Muslim culture on the whole of Algeria.

Italy's government shaky

The rightist coalition government elected last March in Italy is becoming increasingly shaky. A massive general strike against government austerity measures, which would drastically cut pensions and other social benefits took place in October.

Scornful of the workers, the government arrogantly stated they would listen instead to the millions who did not strike. Then, on Nov. 21, the government scored poorly in local elections, running behind Left and centrist parties. Although Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia Party lost heavily, the gain reported by another coalition partner, the neo-fascist National Alliance, was an ominous sign.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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UPS strike helps all workers



by John Marcotte

UPS (United Parcel Service) drivers and loaders walked out all over the nation on Monday, Feb. 7. They showed UPS can't mess around with them. They walked because UPS, without any consultation with the Teamsters union, raised the maximum weight drivers would have to handle from 70 pounds to 150 pounds. A new contract was signed just months ago, and this never came up in the negotiations.

A driver said, "The company didn't even have the decency to tell us. We were the last to know. I'm making pick-ups and suddenly this customer says to me, 'So next week you guys are picking up 150 pounds, right?' That was the first I heard of it. The customers were told a month ago."

UPS DRIVERS UNDER PRESSURE

UPS drivers make over 100 stops a day. They have to go up stairs. They are under constant pressure to work fast. On a January day of snow and freezing rain, a UPS driver told me, "They'll have me in the office tomorrow morning to know why I was running late today. They know there's ice all over, and traffic's not moving. The other month, the wheel fell off a package truck. The driver could have been killed. But the first thing the supervisor asks is, 'Is there any second day air on the truck?' They don't care if you die out there."

On the picket line, UPS workers said they would stay out as long as it took. UPS settled that afternoon. They said no worker would have to handle a package over 70 pounds without help.

Teamsters president Ron Carey, who used to head the New York UPS local union, defied a court injunction in

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Black World

Farrakhan's 'frenzy of self-conceit'



by Lou Turner

Back in 1982 I spoke at a week-long conference on Malcolm X organized by a group of Black students at UCLA. The highlight of the conference was slated to be a long-awaited speech by Khalid Abdul Muhammad, national spokesman for Louis Farrakhan and the NOI (Nation of Islam). Clearly, the Black students believed that Khalid Muhammad represented a historic continuity with the legacy of Malcolm X that they expected to hear articulated as the highpoint of their conference. To their shock and dismay, Khalid Muhammad spewed forth a scurrilous attack on Malcolm X as a "Judas" betraying his "benefactor, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad."

Like his own "benefactor" Louis Farrakhan, whose ascendancy in the NOI also began with his doing the bidding of Elijah Muhammad in carrying out the character assassination of Malcolm X as prelude to the latter's actual assassination, Khalid Muhammad demonstrated his zeal to re-assassinate Malcolm's character before an entirely new generation of young Black activists. Which is why Farrakhan's ghoulish display of one of Malcolm's assassins as a hero at two recent rallies is no accident. It's his attempt to drive the ghost of Malcolm X back into the night.

Far from any of this being merely anecdotal, it actually goes to the heart of the current phenomenon of Black anti-Semitism associated with Farrakhan, and which has also taken up residency in Black academia.

PATHOLOGY OF BLACK FUNDAMENTALISM

Frantz Fanon was surely right: the logic of anti-Semitism is that it is inherently anti-Black. Khalid Muhammad not only attacked Jews in the sociopathic diatribe at Kean College in New Jersey, that finally led to his being censured by Farrakhan, following an avalanche of public condemnation. He also attacked Nelson Mandela and an array of Black leaders and intellectuals. However, it is

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Chiapas: a new form of struggle?

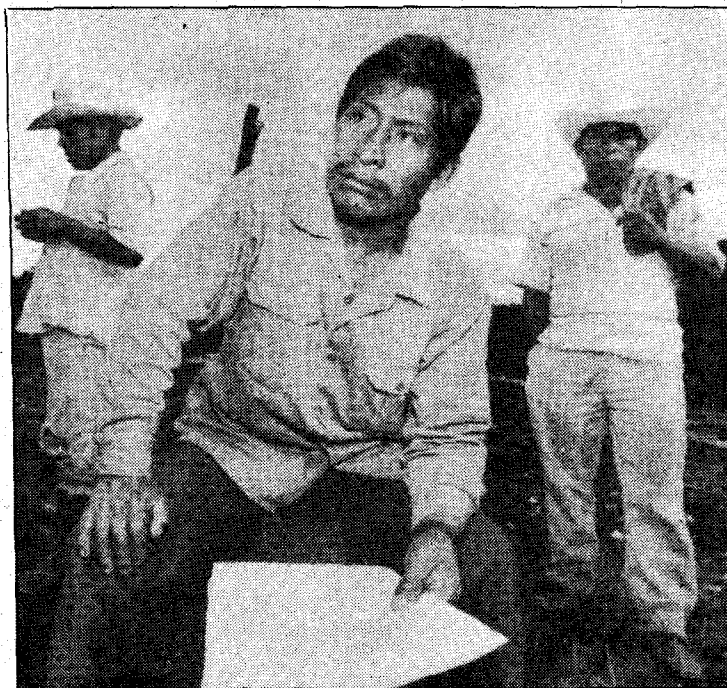
by Carlos Varela

Editor's note: As we go to press, the Mexican government has announced a tentative peace agreement with the Zapatista rebels. The government's effort to contain the Chiapas revolt gives new urgency to grasping the revolt's underlying meaning.

On Jan. 1, 1994, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), signed by the governments of Mexico, Canada and the U.S., went into effect. That same day, an army of about 2,000 indigenous people of the state of Chiapas, Mexico, under the name of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), declared war on the Mexican state, shocking the post-Cold War world. This peasant uprising is a clear response to the exploitation and genocide that the indigenous people have been suffering through the centuries. NAFTA and the neo-liberal policies imposed by the Salinas government, which deepen the inhuman conditions of not only the peasants but also all Mexican workers, were the trigger for the uprising.

THE NEO-LIBERAL 'MIRACLE'

The social conditions in Mexico were aggravated in the last 12 years by these neo-liberal policies, the new form in which capitalism is presented. In Latin America, the results of these policies are evident not only in the 1989 uprisings in Caracas and Buenos Aires, but also in the revolts in Santiago del Estero, Argentina, this past December (see N&L, January-February, 1994), and in the current Indian, worker, and student strikes and revolts all over Ecuador. These neo-liberal policies mean "economic growth" through the com-



Indian in Chiapas shows papers demanding land.

plete privatization of state companies, a strong reduction in the work force, a reduction of tariffs, the elimination of all social programs, the implementation of an export economy and the reduction of subsidies for agriculture. All this in order to attract foreign capital investment through maintaining a cheap labor force.

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Editorial

U.S., Russia in Bosnia cockpit

The shooting down of four Serbian bombers over Bosnia on Feb. 27 by U.S. warplanes operating under the guise of NATO has brought a new reality to the crisis afflicting Bosnia-Herzegovina. Together with Clinton's threat to attack Serbian positions following the bombing of the Sarajevo marketplace on Feb. 5 and the subsequent Serb decision to withdraw their heavy weaponry around Sarajevo under the rubric of a Russian "peace plan," the major powers have thrust themselves into one of the bloodiest conflicts of the post-Cold War world.

The Clinton administration's use of direct military might to enforce a "no fly zone" over Bosnia coincides with intense diplomatic moves to impose a settlement on the warring parties. Yet it would be sheer illusion to conclude that the Clinton administration is acting out of deference to the interests of the Bosnians.

This is especially seen in how, despite recent Bosnian military advances against Serbian and Croatian forces, the major powers have said nothing about lifting the UN-imposed arms embargo so that Bosnia could defend itself from outright genocide. That is indeed the rub. The major powers are intervening in order to ensure that they, and not the Bosnian people, determine the shape of things to come in this war-torn land.

In fact, as a result of the recent developments the U.S. and Russia appear poised to pressure Bosnia into accepting a partition of their country—precisely the goal the Serbs have fought to attain in their genocidal war to destroy Bosnia's multiethnic heritage.

As one commentator put it, Western and Russian "policy remains committed to the idea that the government of Bosnia must agree not only to partition but to an unfair partition that leaves the Serbian side substantial areas that were predominantly Muslim. [They] differ only on the degree of unfairness they think the Muslims should accept." If further intervention occurs, "it will be an intervention aimed not at undoing the partition of Bosnia but of stabilizing it." (Martin Woollacott, *The Guardian* [London], Feb. 10, 1994.)

This new situation raises so many questions for those striving to work out genuine grassroots solidarity with the Bosnian struggle for freedom and self-determination that we need to review the path which led to today's contradictory reality.

THE ROAD TO DIRECT INTERVENTION

At the start of this year the U.S. became embroiled in an acrimonious public dispute with France over Western policy towards Bosnia-Herzegovina. France wanted the U.S. to become directly engaged in efforts to persuade Bosnia to accept its partition, while the Clinton administration insisted that this was less its concern than Europe's. In truth, both the U.S. and France long ago accepted the idea of Bosnia's partition. But Clinton wanted France and the other European powers to press the issue

so that the U.S. could "disengage" from the thorny issue of Bosnia altogether.

All this changed by early February, when the Bosnian army began recording important advances against Serb and Croat forces. The U.S. felt compelled to involve itself more actively on the Bosnian issue, especially following the Feb. 5 Serb mortar attack on the Sarajevo marketplace which killed 68 civilians. The worldwide outcry against this murderous assault brought into sharp focus the inhumanity of the Western powers, which had refused to lift a finger against the genocidal war being waged against the Bosnian people.

Concerned with this image of Western inaction, Clinton got France and other European powers to support the idea of using NATO to launch air strikes against Serbian artillery installations surrounding Sarajevo in exchange for U.S. agreement to press the Bosnians into accepting concessions at the negotiating table.

Yet it is not only the situation in Bosnia per se, as much as broader geopolitical considerations, which appears to have motivated the U.S. turn to direct engagement in Bosnia. Clinton argued that the threat of air strikes was needed because "We have an interest in showing that NATO, history's greatest military alliance, remains a credible force for peace in post-Cold War Europe." One U.S. diplomat in Europe put it more bluntly: "The NATO ultimatum is not about Bosnia. It is about the appearance of NATO credibility." (Quoted in "U.S. Shifts Course on Bosnia, Backing Europe's Partition Plan," by Robert Marquard in *The Christian Science Monitor*, Feb. 17, 1994.)

THE RUSSIAN FACTOR

The question then is, why would the U.S. suddenly become so concerned about the credibility of NATO when for the last several years NATO has increasingly been viewed as a relic of the Cold War and "a carcass of dead policies"? The answer lies not so much in the situation in Bosnia as in the recent events in Russia.

Russia's move away from "free market" shock therapy and toward a more assertive foreign policy based on its

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On the Inside

Essay Article

by Laurie Cashdan

After a decade in which feminist scholars produced a veritable torrent of theoretical writings aimed at freeing analyses of gender from the quagmires of biological determinism and economic reductionism, feminist theory has become synonymous for many with postmodernism. It may seem strange, then, that several scholars have called recently for a reconsideration of Marxism and humanism. Such calls have emerged from some of the feminists who shifted away from Marxism in the early 1980s and now find themselves facing an unprecedented problem. After immersing themselves in the postmodernism of French theorists such as Foucault and Derrida, many

Filipinas blast 'joke'



New York, N.Y.—Gabriela Network, the Filipina women's organization, has wrung an apology from actor Liam Neeson for his racist, sexist remark, published in the December 1993 issue of GQ magazine. The star of "Schindler's List" had told the GQ writer he couldn't show her his loft because "those Filipino girls are still tied up and stuff." Gabriela sent him and the magazine an open letter, which asks:

"How an actor can immerse himself in such a film and emerge with a soul so crass that he cannot draw parallels between the Holocaust and the systematic trafficking in women from the Philippines....Some 250,000 are funneled into the international labor market every year....Sixteen Filipinas were murdered in Australia by their husbands; over a thousand fled abusive employers in Kuwait; some 75,000 work as sex slaves in Japan....and over 60,000 were prostituted in the vicinity of the U.S. bases in the Philippines."

The letter also condemns jokes about violence against women, noting Neeson's emphasis on race and youth.

After posters about the comment appeared in Neeson's New York neighborhood, and the Los Angeles chapter of Gabriela made plans to picket him at the Academy Awards, Gabriela received a letter of apology, which states in part, "As an Irishman, I know from personal experience the distress that seemingly harmless 'racist' jokes can cause. Please know that I did not intend to denigrate or offend Philipino [sic] women in any way. Indeed I have only the highest regard for all women, irrespective of their race."

The women are demanding that both letters be printed in GQ.

—Gabriela supporter

Parents walk out

San Francisco, Cal.—I work with a non-profit organization, Parents Helping Parents, which provides training on how to access special education services for parents of disabled children. The state is required by law to get parental input into the running of this organization. I've been working there since September. While the "philosophy" is very noble, since December there's been a change. It used to be parent-focused: all employees are parents of disabled children, we had flexible hours, full medical benefits, and a living wage.

At the beginning of the year the administrator brought in a management consultant. The first thing she did was to cut out flex time. She cut vacation time. She wants everyone there from nine to five. She started changing job descriptions even though they were written as part of the grant. She tried to drive a wedge between us. Out of the original seven workers, only two people now get medical benefits.

People started quitting or going on indefinite stress leave. She wanted me to stay until six. I have three kids who wouldn't have anyone to take care of them. We're supposed to be here to empower each other. How is it that this person can come in here and ruin everything? The worst insult was when she handed down a rule that we can no longer talk to each other in the office.

That's when we staged a walkout. Now we talk to each other more than ever. She managed to bring us together. We felt free and empowered because we were willing to risk our livelihood.

—Black working mother

Feminism and Marx's humanism reconsidered

now worry they have uncoupled theory from feminist politics.

The fall of "Communism" and claims that this represents "the end of history" lend new urgency to these concerns. Feminists who reject this conclusion find it increasingly urgent to work out a liberatory feminist politics powerful enough to transcend former "socialist" countries' failure to abolish women's oppression.

These concerns do not reflect a need to return to the mechanical materialism of post-Marx Marxists who only explained gender inequality in terms of root economic causes. Indeed, the problem has emerged in the process of searching for a non-reductive social theory which shows that women's oppression—because it has no iron-clad root clauses—can also be overturned. This process led many to focus on theories which pose discourse or language as the site where all meaning, including that of gender, is structured. Yet this is the source of anxiety.

Jennifer Ring argues that by deconstructing the way gender inequality is structured through "texts" or discourses, postmodernist theorists act as if "[t]he power of the past is undone by an act of literary will. It is too facile a solution." She calls for a return to dialectics which would have "human freedom as its agenda."

Michèle Barrett writes in a 1992 essay that although Foucault's concept of discourse sees gender ideology as no mere reflection of economic determinants or essential human nature, his anti-humanist theory lacks active human subjects. Indeed, his argument that subjects are also structured through this discourse make it impossible to imagine how individuals have agency—or the will to act to transform our lives and society. "It may well be," she writes, "that to develop a better account of subjective political motivation we shall have to reopen in new and imaginative ways the issue of humanism."

BARRETT REACHES IMPASSE

Barrett's call to "reopen...the issue of humanism" is significant to trace here because her writings represent a well-travelled road that took many feminists first to post-Marx Marxism and then to poststructuralism. Although Barrett's new turn to "humanism" amounts to little more than feminist ethics and values, other feminists have turned anew to Marx's "new humanism" (his term in the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*) to illuminate new emancipatory pathways.

To trace the road which led Barrett to her concern

1. Jennifer Ring, *Modern Political Theory and Contemporary Feminism: A Dialectical Analysis* (State University of New York Press, 1991), pp. 20-21.

2. Michèle Barrett, "Words and Things: Materialism and Method in Contemporary Feminist Analysis," in *Destabilizing Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates* (Stanford, 1992), pp. 216-17.

3. German feminist Frigga Haug explores Marx's 1844 *Manuscripts in Beyond Female Masochism: Memory-Work and Politics* (Verso, 1992). Raya Dunayevskaya's 35-year journey into Marx's "new humanism" in relation to feminism can be traced in *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future* (Humanities, 1985).

over the problematic of humanism and the impasse at which she finds herself in her work of the 1990s, we must begin with *Women's Oppression Today: The Marxist/Feminist Encounter* (Verso, 1980). She assesses the goal of Marxist feminism there as a non-reductive, historical analysis of the link between capitalist exploitation and gender. This quest takes her first to French

(continued on page 10)

Oppose slave labor!

Chinatown, N.Y.—Six months after 43 dining room workers struck the Silver Palace Restaurant, they and their supporters continue to picket every lunch and dinner. A cardboard coffin symbolizes the death of slave labor in Chinatown, where it is common for people to work 80 hours a week at illegally low wages. The workers, who are women and men, explain that they are striking not only for themselves, but for all the exploited immigrants in Chinatown, and this gives them the strength to keep fighting.

The Silver Palace was the only unionized restaurant in Chinatown. Last year the bosses imposed a contract that cut wages from \$7 - \$8 to \$2.90 per hour, eliminated benefits and seniority rights, and required waiters to share tips with management, which is illegal. Workers unanimously rejected the contract and were locked out.

The NLRB (Labor Board) has issued a complaint and the state is investigating, but legal action against the restaurant is interminably slow. Wing Lam of the Chinese Staff & Workers' Association (CWSA), which organized the 318 Restaurant Workers Union, says racism is at the root of failure to enforce the labor laws:

"Everyone knows about the slave labor in Chinatown. The government promotes the stereotype that Chinese people want to work seven days a week, that we don't want to take our kids out one day. Immigrants are allowed into this country in order to be cheap labor. American workers won't take these jobs. African Americans say, 'We've been through slavery already.'"

"A lot of people say if you fight for better wages and working conditions, jobs will disappear. We say if you give in, everyone's wages will go down to the level of slave labor. We believe we can't be free unless all are free."

The CWSA is fighting the Chinatown establishment, including the largest social service agency, the Chinese-American Planning Council. Everyone is watching to see what will happen. Waiters from several restaurants have contacted the union to discuss organizing.

Support for the strikers is growing. Complaints to Home Savings Bank about sponsoring the entertainment for a senior citizens' banquet at the Silver Palace caused the bank to withdraw. The Women's Action Coalition (WAC) held a Valentine's Day party that drew 300 people and raised \$1500. Other unions will hold a rally at the Silver Palace March 13. Contact CWSA at (212) 619-7979 for more information.

—Anne Jaclard

Reproductive freedom: demands and debates

Chicago, Ill.—On Jan. 22 around 150 high-spirited demonstrators rallied, marched and held a program with speeches and poetry to support reproductive freedom. Their focus was on stopping any parental consent law from being passed in Illinois and to demand that it be revoked in states where it is already in place.

What was so inspiring was that more than half the participants were high school students from the city and suburbs. Most have formed organizations in their schools about many issues. Some of the organizations are youth chapters of NARAL (which has a new name—National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League).

Many said they were organizing to convince legislators in their areas not to pass parental consent laws, while also working to change conditions and consciousness in their schools. They no longer feel alienated and alone after finding so much support from other students.

Speakers from African American Women In Defense Of Ourselves, The Chicago Abortion Fund, and the Emergency Clinic Defense Coalition raised serious issues, including critiques of the pro-choice movement.

One speaker claimed the anti-choicers have won ground because "we have compromised young and poor women's rights" and have looked to Clinton, when "what we need is to orient our movement not only for women's rights, but for women's liberation." Another discussed issues like children as property. And a third pointed to the plight of many young Latinas in the country illegally, who have to face both family and state when seeking an abortion.

This was definitely the best pro-choice event I have been to in a long time!

—Sonia Bergonzi

Chicago, Ill.—The Supreme Court decision Jan. 24, that pro-choice organizations can sue anti-abortion groups trying to shut down clinics under the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), appears as a great victory for the National Organization for Women (NOW). Yet Justice Souter's decision two weeks later to allow the Pennsylvania Abortion Control Act to take effect underlines that the RICO decision makes no less urgent the fight for women's reproductive freedom.

The RICO decision allows pro-choice groups to sue for such huge damages that they could put anti-abortion

groups "out of business." But what the Supreme Court is really upholding isn't women's right to control our own bodies—it's free enterprise! Although RICO has been used in important cases against the Ku Klux Klan, RICO could also be used against environmental and anti-nuclear groups' blockades. Since the Los Angeles rebellion, RICO has been used to indict members of gangs, which the government calls "conspiracies." One commentator on the crackdown in L.A., labor historian Mike Davis, calls RICO "an all-embracing conspiracy statute that circumvents traditional canons of evidence and due process," parallel to the anti-secession laws of the post-World War I period.

Clearly NOW's goal of stopping the attacks on abortion clinics is an urgent one. However, Souter's decision brings home that to fight the anti-abortionists, we can't look to laws that defend capitalism, but have to fight, uncompromisingly, for women's liberation.

—L.B.C.



Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

More than 1,000 women gathered in Costa del Sol, El Salvador in late 1993 for the Sixth Feminist Encuentro of Latin America and the Caribbean, despite efforts by the right-wing ARENA party to keep them away. Conference organizers and service providers faced death threats; TV, radio and newspaper ads warned women not to attend; and over 100 women were detained for hours at the airport the day before it started.

In the spirit of the South Korean "comfort women" (sexually enslaved by the Japanese military during WWII) who are demanding reparations, the Korean Women's Associations United, a coalition of 12 women's organizations, has presented to the National Assembly a draft Special Sexual Violence Act. It demands changing the definition of sexual violence from "violence against women's purity" to "violence against women's self-determination." Other demands include: protecting all women regardless of status; the inclusion of not only rape but sexual harassment; prompt action in achieving justice, and government shelters to aid victims.

—Information from *Women's News Watch*

Wave of strikes in Eastern Europe

by Stephen Steiger

Prague, Czech Republic—A wave of strikes going on in Romania, Belarus, Russia and Ukraine these days documents palpably the worsening living conditions of a great part of the population.

In Minsk, the capital of **BELARUS**, one of the most conservative of the former "Soviet" republics, free trade unions called for a general, political and unlimited strike in order to force both the Supreme Soviet and the government to resign and to have premature parliamentary elections. To appease the workers the prime minister appealed for a return to some economic measures used under the "Soviet" system, among them government-controlled stable prices.

In **ROMANIA** there were several clashes between police and striking miners in the regional city of Tirgu Jiu. About a thousand miners penetrated by force into the building of the prefecture. The miners have not been paid their wages for at least the last two months.

In neighboring **UKRAINE** more than a hundred miners from the coal region of Donetsk held a hunger strike

inside the building of the State Committee for Coal Industry. Some of the pits had not been able to pay the miners' wages since last December because their customers did not pay for the coal supplied to them. The miners issued a proclamation in which they declared:

"We want to hear from the Ukrainian president what we can expect, what our families can expect. Mr. President, you have promised to meet us. However, you did not keep your promise and you made plain you despised the labor collectives that have sent us to Kiev [the capital]. We will not allow anybody to deceive us."

In **RUSSIA** employees of the universities, including students of 180 of them in 55 regions, held a one-day all-federation protest. A few hundred employees of the institutes and offices in the branches of science, culture and education gathered in Moscow at a peaceful demonstration holding up a banner with the following words on it: "Today it is the students who are starving—tomorrow we will have only a crippled Russia—scientists that go begging are a shame for the government and the president."

The doctors of Moscow emergency services will go on strike beginning March 1. Starting Feb. 21 workers of the wood industry went on strike; strike threats came from the communications employees, telephone operators and workers of some branches of the armaments industry. There are two immediate reasons for these phenomena: lack of government finances for wages as well as debts the government has already made in this respect.

Most of the coal districts were not working in mid-February, the rest being on strike alert. As so often in

(continued on page 9)

Reactions to Chiapas

Chicago, Ill.—It has been a month and a half since rebels mounted an attack on the government in the state of Chiapas in southern Mexico. When I went to work the day after the rebellion began, I was amazed at my co-workers' reactions.

Several workers, including myself, were on break when one of them said he wanted to read the paper, especially on the rebellion. At this point several others decided that they wanted to read about it too, so a struggle began over the one paper that was in the break room. The struggle ended when someone suggested going out to get other papers from the machine.

After everyone was settled with their own paper and quietly reading, several of them made comments such as: "They do the Indians down there just as they do up here" and "I've been hearing that the Mexican people want NAFTA and then I find out that many of them don't want it, just like us." There was "joy" at seeing a revolution unfold right before their eyes in a place that is not too far from here. I did not hear one negative comment about the rebellion.

I have never heard any of these people say anything about politics or revolution. It is like these workers are silently waiting for something like this to happen so they can rise up against the rulers of this world of misery. How many more workers who feel the same way are out there?—the Silent Revolutionaries just waiting patiently for the sign.

I am glad that the Chiapas revolutionaries had the courage to carry out their revolt and not remain silent any longer, yet I am sad about the reprisals many will have to suffer at the hands of the government and its soldiers. I am the son of a Mexican national, and I am proud that the rebellion took place in Mexico, where I have seen the misery first-hand. I am angry about the lies that both the Mexican and U.S. governments have been feeding us. I still have many questions, such as: What is the link between Chiapas and the Los Angeles rebellion of 1992? What would Karl Marx and Raya Dunayevskaya have to say about the revolt? How does revolutionary philosophy fit into the picture?

I have a book at home that shows that foods such as corn, beans, chili peppers and tomatoes originated in Mexico and Central America and fanned out all over the world. Perhaps the seeds of the new revolution will do the same.

—Martin Almora

Oberlin threatens workers

Oberlin, Ohio—The Oberlin College Employees Association—food service workers, custodians, grounds keepers and maintenance workers—sought affiliation with the UAW (United Auto Workers) in 1991. The NLRB (Labor Board) forced it to recognize the union in 1992. Now Oberlin is trying to break the union instead of negotiating a first contract. The Labor Board has charged the college with intimidating employees.

We joined the UAW because the new human resources director, A.G. Monaco, changed the custodians' shifts and put us in teams, what they call performance management. We must log every time we go into a room and say how long we spend in it. They tell you how long you have to clean a room. Two days are never alike. Maybe you'll find a room trashed one day. The next day it will be almost clean.

Our number one demand is better health and safety. The college health and safety person walked us through the biology and science building where chemicals are stored and said don't touch the counter tops. That was our training. In Stockroom Number 163, the supervisors said nothing will hurt us if it is knocked off of the shelf. What's on the shelf is strychnine, acid and formaldehyde. They tell us to walk in rooms every day where signs say "Radiation. Do Not Enter."

We are supposed to dispose of animal waste and rats they experiment on in plastic bags that burst like pieces of paper. Six custodians must take our 15-minute breaks in the janitors' room where there are supplies and dirty mops, and which is four feet wide and eight feet long.

When the employees went to an Oberlin trustees meeting, Pat Penn, dean of students, told us to leave. The students stomped their feet and shouted, "No, we want them here!" We were allowed to stay. The students have also held meetings on campus about performance management, and the UAW has met with them.

—Custodian



German metalworkers held a series of three-hour strikes in early February to demand higher wages. About 600,000 metalworking jobs have been eliminated in the last three years. *The New York Times* (Feb. 13, 1994) opined: "To create new jobs, Germany may find itself forced to move to lower-wage, lower-skilled jobs, as the United States did during the 1980's."

Secret labor dispute

Editor's note: The following article is excerpted from the front page of the Jackson Advocate, "The Voice of Black Mississippians," Feb. 17-23, 1994.

Workers at Jackson's Frito-Lay plant are scheduled to vote for the fifth time on a union contract today (Thursday, Feb. 17). Four other votes, the last being Friday, Feb. 11, ended in rejection.

Although the labor dispute has been brewing for several months, it has received virtually no media attention... In addition to an equitable wage increase, employees' contract demands involve a wide range of issues, including remedying claims of racist practices against the predominantly African American workforce...

Longtime plant manager Ron Mills was transferred last fall amid charges of racism. Workers charged that supervisor Alex Stennis...frequently made racial slurs toward Black employees, especially women, and he too was transferred.

Workers are demanding a wage increase which will put them on the same level as other plants across the southeast. According to one worker who requested anonymity, the average wage at the Jackson plant is nearly \$2 per hour lower than the Charlotte, North Carolina plant, which is the next lowest.

Frito-Lay employees also took issue with a company proposal to go from three eight-hour shifts to two 12-hour shifts because it meant the loss of jobs. However, that plan has already been scrapped...

Yet another issue drawing controversy among workers is a plan to give an entire department a \$1 per hour across-the-board raise. The plan doesn't sit well with the majority of Frito-Lay employees because the department is made up of 21 whites and two Blacks; and no such proposal was offered other workers. Therefore, the predominantly Black workforce considers the proposal to be racist.

Workers in that department would also receive whatever wage increase given other employees when contract negotiations are completed. The best wage offer so far, the *Advocate* was told, has been 28 cents over a three-year period.

Demands also include providing benefits for part-time workers, who are said to make up about 20 percent of the plant's labor force.

'Ergonomics' at GM

Oklahoma City, Okla.—We have been working without a local contract since September. We were supposed to strike March 2, but the union and General Motors (GM) reached a tentative agreement at the last minute. We never know what we lost until a lot later, but the big issue here is ergonomics, which is just a GM-union safety expert trying to make the job easy enough so a person won't get hurt. GM says it lowers their liability insurance, but they are still hurting people by overloading them. Right now, 15% of the work force is on workers' comp. That's out of 4,500 people in the plant.

The current situation started out with too many unresolved 78s (grievances). As soon as GM overloads a job, the union files a 78. There were about 500 78s plantwide as of last fall. A good share of them were from the body shop. The union bargained them down to about 130 before calling for a strike.

Just a few days before the strike date, so many people were out that they couldn't give us emergency breaks. "If you got to go, you got to go" was the idea that went down the line, and people left on breaks as they saw fit. In the body shop, welds went by, but there weren't any team leaders to fill in.

On one welding operation, people came up with sore wrists, tendonitis and carpal tunnel syndrome. OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) came in and said there were too many repetitive welds on that job. Where someone has to put a complete line of welds across the rocker panel, the company took off 14 welds. They left 32 welds. We do 77 bodies an hour.

When they set up VIP, the Voluntary Input Process—which is really team concept—they said we either have to join a team or stay on a job. If you join a team, you rotate onto all the jobs in your group. You never get to know an easier way to do the job. One guy rotated off his regular job one day, and he ended up on sick leave for the next four months. They had put him on a job he wasn't familiar with, and he tripped and hurt his ankle.

They are trying to take as much out of us as possible before shutting down or automating completely.

—GM worker

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

ordering the Monday walkout, the first day UPS was to impose the 150-pound limit. Now UPS has sued the Teamsters for \$50 million for the one-day walkout. UPS is big money, they have the courts on their side. I believe they want to send a message to Teamsters, saying if you stand up for your rights, if your leadership doesn't negotiate away your rights, we will hurt you.

As a freight Teamster, I feel proud we finally have a union that said to hell with the judge, we're not going to injure ourselves handling 150 pounds. Our national freight contract expires next month, and that UPS walkout, together with the dues increase we are voting on this month to strengthen the strike fund, is the right message to send the freight companies: we are serious and will go all the way if need be.

The biggest issue for us is double-breasting. Union companies open non-union subsidiaries and divert business to them. Then they cry they can't compete with non-union companies so we have to make concessions. But it is their own non-union companies they are "competing" against!

NON-UNION AND PART-TIME WORKERS

On the day of the UPS walkout, a Federal Express driver said he hoped the UPS drivers won, because if UPS went up to 150 pounds, Federal Express would go up to 200 pounds! Federal Express is non-union, so the workers have no say. To that non-union worker, a victory by the unionized UPS workers was a victory for him.

I have heard the word "scab" misused at work to mean, not a worker, union or non-union, who crosses a picket line, but simply a non-union worker. That is a dangerous attitude. Management has every intention to take away our rights and pay and reduce us to the condition of non-union companies. They would love to divide us. The non-union worker is not our enemy.

Thousands of workers try to unionize and are fired every year. Millions more don't even try because there seems to be no way, with the laws and NLRB (Labor Board) stacked against workers, not to mention contradictions in the unions themselves. Since deregulation of trucking, railroads and airlines in the early '80s, most union trucking companies have shut down.

It doesn't mean the companies aren't lying when they cry about competition. Most of LTL (less than truckload) freight is still carried by unionized trucking. Their main bargaining organization, TMI (Trucking Management Incorporated), wants to begin a part-timer job classification like at UPS, which would also be lower paid. UPS got that a number of contracts ago, and now I believe almost half of UPS workers are lower paid part-timers. And no progress was made on that in the last contract.

TMI also wants to do like UPS in getting "production and performance" standards. We handle a lot more than 150 pounds. We need the time to do the job safely and do it right. We cannot let the companies set production standards on this kind of job.

When UPS workers walked, they helped us in our negotiations, and helped non-union Federal Express workers. When previous UPS union leaders gave up concessions on part-timers and productivity, that has come down to hurt us too. Union and non-union, we are all in this together.

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya Marxist-Humanist Archives

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

Editor's note: This spring News and Letters Committees will hold a special class series on "Why Hegel's Phenomenology? Why Now?" As part of the preparation for this series, we publish here for the first time anywhere excerpts of Raya Dunayevskaya's letter of Nov. 11, 1963 to Erich Fromm, which focuses on the section of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* entitled "Spirit in Self-Estrangement." All quotes in the following text are from the translation by J.B. Baillie (London: Allen & Unwin, 1931). The first parenthetical pagination refers to this Baillie translation (designated by 'B'); the second is to the translation by A.B. Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), designated by 'M.' All footnotes have been supplied by the editors.

To participate in the class series, see the announcement below and contact News & Letters for a syllabus and schedule of classes in your area.

The central reason for this correspondence is a sort of an appeal to you for a dialogue on Hegel between us. I believe I once told you that I had for a long time carried on such a written discussion with Herbert Marcuse, especially relating to the "Absolute Idea." With his publication of Soviet Marxism, this became impossible because, whereas we had never seen eye to eye, until his rationale for Communism the difference in viewpoints only helped the development of ideas, but the gulf widened too much afterward. There are so few—in fact, to be perfectly frank, I know none—Hegelians in this country that are also interested in Marxism that I'm presently very nearly compelled "to talk to myself." Would a Hegelian dialogue interest you?

I should confess at once that I do not have your sympathy for Existentialism, but until Sartre's declaration that he was now a Marxist, our worlds were very far apart. With his *Critique de la Raison Dialectique* (the Introduction of which has just been published here under the title, *Search For A Method*) I felt I had to take issue. I enclose my review of it, which is mimeographed for the time being, but I hope to publish it both in English and French.¹ In any case, it was in the process of my work on this that I reread the section of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* which deals with "Spirit in Self-Estrangement—the Discipline of Culture." Not only did I find this a great deal more illuminating than the contemporary works on Sartre, but I suddenly also saw a parallel between this and Marx's [concept of the] "Fetishism of Commodities." With your indulgence, I would like to develop this here, and hope it elicits comments from you.

The amazing Hegelian critique of culture relates both to the unusual sight of an intellectual criticizing culture, the culture of the Enlightenment at that, and to the historic period criticized since this form of alienation follows the victory of Reason over self-consciousness. Politically speaking, such a period I would call "What Happens After?", that is to say, what happens after a revolution has succeeded and we still get, not so much a new society, as a new bureaucracy? Now let's follow the dialectic of Hegel's argument:

First of all he establishes (p.510B; 295M) that "Spirit in this case, therefore, constructs not merely one world, but a twofold world, divided and self-opposed."

Secondly, it is not only those who aligned with state power ("the haughty vassal") (p.528B; p.307M)—from Louis XIV's "L'eta c'est moi" to the Maos of today who, now that they identify state power and wealth with themselves, of necessity enter a new stage: "in place of revolt appears arrogance" (p.539B; p.315M)—who feel the potency of his dialectic. It is his own chosen field: knowledge, ranging all the way from a criticism of Ba-

con's "Knowledge is power," (p.515B; p.298M) to Kant's "Pure ego is the absolute unity of apperception" (p.552B; p.323M). Here is why he is so critical of thought:

"This type of spiritual life is the absolute and universal inversion of reality and thought, their entire estrangement the one from the other; it is pure culture. What is found out in this sphere is that neither the concrete realities, state power and wealth, nor their determinate conceptions, good and bad, nor the consciousness of good and bad (the consciousness that is noble and the consciousness that is base) possess real truth; it is found that all these moments are inverted and transmuted the one into the other, and each is the opposite of itself." (p.541B; p.316M)

Now this inversion of thought to reality is exactly what Marx deals with in "The Fetishism of Commodities," [in Vol. I of *Capital*] and it is the reason for his confidence in the proletariat as Reason as against the bourgeois "false consciousness," or the fall of philosophy to ideology. Marx insists that a commodity, far from being something as simple as it appears, is a "fetish" which makes the conditions of capitalist production appear as self-evident truths of social production. All look

where the individual will is still struggling with the universal will? Well, it is nothing but—terror.

The forms of alienation in "Absolute Freedom and Terror" are so bound up with "pure personality" that I could hardly keep myself, when reading, from "asking" Hegel: how did you meet Sartre? "It is conscious of its pure personality and with that of all spiritual reality; and all reality is solely spirituality; the world is for it absolutely its own will." (p.600B; p.356M) And further:

What that freedom contained was the world absolutely in the form of consciousness, as a universal will....The form of culture, which it attains in interaction with that essential nature, is, therefore, the grandest and the last, is that of seeing its pure and simple reality immediately disappear and pass away into empty nothingness....All these determinate elements disappear with the disaster and ruin that overtake the self in the state of absolute freedom; its negation is meaningless death, sheer horror of the negative which has nothing positive in it, nothing that gives a filling." (p.608B; p.362M)

This was the result of getting itself ("the pure personality") in "the rage and fury of destruction"—only to find "isolated singleness".

"Now that it is done with destroying the organiza-

Announcing a class series this spring in Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco-Bay Area

On the 150th anniversary of Marx's Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844

Why Hegel's Phenomenology? Why Now?

"It never fails that, at momentous world historic turning points, it is very difficult to tell the difference between two types of twilight—whether one is first plunging into utter darkness or whether one has reached the end of long night and is just at the moment before the dawn of a new day. In either case, the challenge to find the meaning—what Hegel called 'the undefined foreboding of something unknown'—becomes a compulsion to dig for new beginnings, for a philosophy that would try to answer the question, 'Where to Begin?'"

—Raya Dunayevskaya, 1987

Class 1

Totality as New Beginning

The Preface and Introduction to
Hegel's *Phenomenology*

Class 2

The Master/Slave Dialectic

Labor, the Black and Latino Dimensions,
and Women's Liberation

Class 3

The Pitfalls of False Consciousness

Stoicism, Skepticism, and
the Unhappy Consciousness

Class 4

Spirit in Self-Estrangement (I)

Fetishisms of State Power, Culture and "The Party"

Class 5

Spirit in Self-Estrangement (II)

What Happens After the Revolution?

Class 6

Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy

The "End of History" versus
Philosophic New Beginnings

Attention Chicago readers!

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at the appearance, therefore, the duality of the commodity, of the labor incorporated in it, of the whole society based on commodity "culture." It is true that the greater part of his famous section is concerned with showing that the fantastic form of appearance of the relations between men as if it were an exchange of things is the truth of relations in the factory itself where the worker has been transformed into an appendage to a machine. But the very crucial footnotes all relate to the fact that even the discoverers of labor as the source of value, Smith and Ricardo, could not escape becoming prisoners of this fetishism because therein they met their historic barrier.

Whether you think of it as "fetishism of commodities" or "the discipline of culture," the "absolute inversion" of thought to reality has a dialectic all its own when it comes to the rootless intellectual. Take Enlightenment. Despite its great fight against superstition, despite its great achievement—"Enlightenment upsets the household arrangements, which spirit carries out in the house of faith, by bringing in the goods and furnishings belonging to the world of the Here and Now..." (p.512B; p.296M)—it remains "an alienated type of mind": "Enlightenment itself, however, which reminds belief of the opposite of its various separate moments, is just as little enlightened regarding its own nature. It takes up a purely negative attitude to belief..." (p.582B; p.344M).

In a word, because no new universal—Marx too speaks that only true negativity can produce the "quest for universal" and hence a new society—was born to counterpose to superstition or the unhappy consciousness, we remain within the narrow confines of "the discipline of culture"—and this even when Enlightenment has found its truth in Materialism, or Agnosticism, or Utilitarianism. For unless it has found it in freedom, there is no movement forward either of humanity or "the spirit." And what is freedom in this inverted world

tion of the actual world, and subsists in isolated singleness, this is its sole object, an object that has no other content left, no other possession, existence and external extension, but is merely this knowledge of itself as absolutely pure and free individual self." (p.605B; p.360M)

I wish also that all the believers in the "vanguard party to lead" studied hard—and not as an "idealist," but as the most farseeing realist—the manner in which Hegel arrives at his conclusions through a study that the state, far from representing the "universal will" represents not even a party, but only a "faction." (p.605B; p.360M, Hegel's emphasis) But then it really wouldn't be "the self-alienated type of mind" Hegel is tracing through development of the various stages of alienation in consciousness, and Marx does it in production and the intellectual spheres that correspond to these relations.

It happens that I take seriously Marx's statement that "all elements of criticism lie hidden in it (The Phenomenology) and are often already prepared and worked out in a manner extending far beyond the Hegelian standpoint. The sections on 'Unhappy Consciousness,' the 'Honorable Consciousness,' the fight of the noble and downtrodden consciousness, etc., etc. contain the critical elements—although still in an alienated form—of whole spheres like Religion, the State, Civic Life, etc."² Furthermore, I believe that the unfinished state of Marx's Humanist Essays makes imperative that we delve into Hegel, not for any scholastic reasons, but because it is of the essence for the understanding of today.

2. This quote is from Marx's "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," the concluding essay in his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, also known as his "Humanist Essays." For Dunayevskaya's translation of this essay (which she was the first to publish in English), see Appendix A to the 1958 edition of her *Marxism and Freedom*, from 1776 until Today.

1. For Dunayevskaya's critique of *Search for a Method*, see "Sartre's Method to Undermine Marxism" in *News & Letters*, Oct. 1963. See also "Jean-Paul Sartre: Outsider Looking In," in *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), pp. 188-212.

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The rebellion in Chiapas: Is it a new form of struggle?

(continued from page 1)

In Chiapas the consequences of these policies are explicit: The percentage of all the households that have both running water and access to sewers are 18.4% and 10.7% respectively; and of all the population only 34.9% have electricity in a state that generates 60.5% of all the electricity produced in Mexico. Malnutrition in Chiapas is the highest in Mexico: 66.7% (among children: 88.6%). Almost 60% of the children of school age do not receive an education. Poverty is the everyday condition for most of the people in this southern state.

The implementation of neo-liberal policies in Latin America has not only economic and social aspects, but also political ones. The so-called political liberalization that "promotes" an image of democratization has not changed the repressive characteristics of the current governments of the region, especially the Mexican one where abuses of power, electoral fraud and violations of human rights are constantly being denounced by worker and peasant organizations.

THE PROBLEM OF THE LAND

At the root of the problem of the peasants is the ownership of land. The violence against the indigenous people of Mexico throughout their history is manifested in the plunder of their communal land (ejidos) and their resources, and in the violation of the most basic human rights. The historical struggles of the indigenous people to recover their communal lands, not only in Chiapas, but all over the Americas, were not for the sake of owning the land to get a profit from it, but for the simple reason that the common traditional use of the land means freedom for the ones who work on it, it means the space to develop all the capacities which make a person a total human being.

Already in 1928, the Peruvian Marxist Jose Carlos Mariategui wrote that the destruction of the Indian communal lands did not make the Indians either small landowners or free workers. It only meant the formation of latifundia (big landed estates) owned by few non-Indian landlords.¹

Though under the latifundia regime Indian communal work has been extinguished through years of brutal repression, cooperation and solidarity still exist. The Zapatistas' call to the rest of the Mexican people to be part of their struggle is a clear demonstration of the traditional spirit of solidarity and cooperation among indigenous people.

In the last two decades, unjustified detentions, torture and murder of peasant organizers, and the clearing out of whole villages occurred in the state of Chiapas. On Jan. 6, 1992, with the reform of Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution, poor peasants' access to land was terminated in favor of big landlords, thus promoting the formation of latifundia.

This land reform, along with the dismantling of support for agriculture, and free trade of basic grains, which will be expanded under NAFTA, is provoking the displacement, migration and uprooting of rural workers from their homeland to areas where industry is concentrated—Mexico City, the maquiladoras belt in northern Mexico, and the U.S.

There is no doubt that the struggle of the Zapatistas to recover their lands, the ejidos, and put an end to the latifundia system is primary for the peasants in order to change their current oppressive relations of production. As Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S., put it: "For Marx the abolition of private property was not an end in itself but a means toward the abolition of the alienated mode of labor. He did not separate one from the other."²

A NEW FORM OF STRUGGLE

Under these conditions a whole people rose up in arms in a way that took by surprise not only the government, but also a wide spectrum of the so-called Left.

The racist Salinas government became obsessed when it could not identify a "white" vanguard elite leading the Zapatista uprising. Advised by the U.S. ambassador to Mexico, James Jones, the government suggested at first

that Cuban and Central American guerrillas were linked to the uprising. This racist obsession of ignoring the leading role of the Mayan Indians (Tzotzil, Tzeltal, Chol, Tojolabal and other nations) of Chiapas in the revolt is making the government the target of mockery by the population.

On this matter, a communique from the Clandestine Indigenous Revolutionary Committee of the EZLN dated Jan. 6, 1994 was eloquent: "The EZLN does not have foreigners in its ranks or among its leadership, nor has it ever received any support or training from revolutionary forces of other countries or from foreign governments...The commanders and troop elements of the EZLN are mostly Indians from Chiapas. This is so because the indigenous represent the poorest and most



humiliated sector of Mexico, and also, as can be seen, the most dignified."

On the other hand, Maoists, Stalinists, Trotskyists and Castroists are obsessively looking for a "vanguard" run by a small cadre of unchallenged and enlightened leaders, thereby reproducing the elitist, classist and racist rationale of the government. As against such a concept of the backwardness of the masses, the EZLN was explicit in a press release dated Jan. 20, 1994: "Revolutionary social change in Mexico will not be under the sole leadership of a homogeneous group with a caudillo (leader) that guides it."

UNIVERSAL CHARACTER OF THE STRUGGLE

The Mexican state did not wait a minute to terrorize Indian villages after the uprising through bombings against the civilian population, summary executions, detentions, kidnapping, robbery and torture. On Jan. 8, 21 Indians from Chanal, a village 30 miles east of San Cristobal, were arrested and tortured. On Jan. 12, in Ocosingo, a town that was the scene of the heaviest confrontation between the Zapatistas and the Mexican army, more than 150 people died from government bombings. The government used 21 helicopters, provided by the U.S. for drug control operations, against the mass uprising.

Despite this repression, Indians and non-Indians are fighting back not only in the state of Chiapas, but all over Mexico. On Jan. 12, 250,000 workers, peasants and students demonstrated in Mexico City in support of the indigenous people and peasants fighting for the EZLN and demanding the end of hostilities on the part of the Mexican federal army.

Since the beginning of the uprising, the Zapatistas made sure to build a bridge between the Mayan Indian peasants in revolt and the rest of the worker and peasant masses of Mexico.

In Puebla on Feb. 8, "a new peasant group calling itself the 'Southern Puebla Zapatista Movement' was formed. It...draws support from 3,000 people in 60 Mixtec Indian communities...and it backs the 'social and political plans' of the EZLN" (The Christian Science Monitor, Feb. 11, 1994). In Michoacán, sugar cane workers who have been protesting the closure of the local processing plant are prepared to join the EZLN. In the same state, Purepechan Indians are organizing against the misuse of public works funds by the ruling party.

In the city of Juchitan, Oaxaca, 100,000 people, most of them Indians, held a rally in support of the people in Chiapas, claiming the fight of the EZLN as their own. In the northern state of Coahuila, thousands of peasants demonstrated in support of the EZLN's demands and to start an offensive in defense of the ejido. In Chiapas, since Feb. 7, at least five town halls were occupied and the Pan-American Highway was blocked by peasant organizations that are demanding the removal of 21 municipal presidents (mayors) for corruption.

Despite the government's shortsighted view of the re-

volt, considering it a "local problem," the national mobilization of hundreds of thousands of peasants and workers shows the universality of the struggle of the Zapatistas which represents the Idea of a human, nonalienated world. This same universality is shown in the fact that more than one-third of the Zapatistas are young women (from 15 to 20 years of age), many of whom are leading the uprising. In their communiqués the EZLN made it known that women are also primary protagonists in the revolutionary struggle.

DIVIDE, CO-OPT AND CONQUER

On the same day as the massacre of Ocosingo, Mexican president Carlos Salinas de Gortari ordered a unilateral cease-fire due to pressure from the social and political movements and organizations of the country as well as the national and international media.

The governments' negotiator, Camacho Solis, is trying to split the EZLN using an old but still fashionable tactic among the oppressors: "divide, co-opt and conquer." According to The Christian Science Monitor (Feb. 9, 1994): "Camacho will be trying to split the EZLN into soft-and hard-liners. He will try to win over those who may be ready to sell out...and 'Satanize' the rest...(declaring them) outlaws and bandits and the army will be sent in." Camacho, like the racist government he represents, is at the same time considering a recognition of the EZLN only under the condition they step down from a military to a political force, a situation the EZLN rejects.

PHILOSOPHY AND REVOLUTION

In calling on the working masses of Mexico, Indians and non-Indians, to rise against the state which is oppressing them, the Zapatistas know that without the masses there is no alternative but a mere reformism, or eventually the replacement of the current capitalist state in its neo-liberal form by another one, not different in its essence, like the state-capitalism of China or Cuba.

The struggle that the EZLN began and that seems to be expanding in the rest of the country is reaching for a vision of a new society, of new social relations, that can be developed toward the total transformation of the socially and economically unequal conditions that maintain and reproduce the misery of the indigenous people. The struggle of the Zapatistas is a beginning in this transformation, but a final analysis of this struggle is premature.

We do not know yet with certainty if there is a philosophy of revolution behind the Zapatistas. Again, citing Raya Dunayevskaya: "The transformation of reality has a dialectic all its own. It demands a unity of the struggles for freedom with a philosophy of liberation. Only then does the elemental revolt release new sensibilities, new passions, and new forces—a whole new human dimension." For "without a philosophy of revolution, activism spends itself in mere...anti-capitalism, without ever revealing what it is for."³

The inseparability of philosophy and revolution is a primary condition for the oppressed masses of Mexico to succeed in their revolutionary aspirations. The current "peace" negotiations between the Zapatistas and the Mexican state will give us another sign whether the struggle that started on New Year's Day is for a new beginning or for a mere reformism.

3. See Raya Dunayevskaya's *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 292 and her *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1991), p. 194.

Mexicans and Ecuadorans Report on native revolts

New York—A tour of activists from indigenous communities in Mexico and Ecuador launched a tour of the U.S. Feb. 18, sponsored by a coalition of U.S. Native American, environmental, and academic groups.

Juan Hernandez Meza and Maria Meza Guzman, representing COLPUMALAI, 11 Maya organizations in Chiapas, Mexico, spoke of the military-led massacre that followed the Jan. 1 uprising there. The massacre and the uprising itself were the outcome of "race discrimination and the monopolization of everything by the Mexican state, from the means of communication to the means of physical survival."

The starkest proof of unrelenting discrimination, he said, was the way in which the Mayan is still thought of as good "only for carrying heavy loads like a donkey." The main purpose of his trip was to consolidate support from solidarity organizations because there were sure to be new uprisings in Chiapas and in other states.

Hector Villamil and Leonardo Viteri from the Amazon region of Puyo in Ecuador told of the historic, 400-kilometer march to the capital, in 1992 part of a successful struggle of indigenous people to legalize holdings of 800,000 hectares (2 million acres) of their own land. Their struggle continues, especially against the Arco and Texaco oil companies which have mapped out 2 million hectares (4.9 million acres) where they plan to prepare for exploitation by detonating 92,000 kilos (2,200 tons) of explosives.

The activists described how two entire peoples have already disappeared from the face of the earth, "buried with their environmental knowledge," including medicine, and unique cultural traditions.

For more information about the tour call (707) 839-1178.

—Victor Hart

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THE REAL STATE OF THE UNION

After reading the labor page of the Jan.-Feb. issue of N&L, I felt damn proud of an organization that could produce such a newspaper. B. Ann Lastelle's critique of the white male "well-paid" AFL-CIO type unionism in favor of Cesar Chavez's "political education" unionism speaks powerfully to what I have experienced working with sweated, immigrant labor here in New York. The conditions described on the same page by Black workers in the South sound very close to the conditions experienced by Chinese garment workers here. And the workers I have met from the Chinese Workers' and Staff Association have shown great interest in a broad-based concept of unionism rooted in educating the workers as to the true nature of this system—again, exactly what you have reported in terms of new developments in the South. Something new may be stirring from below, and it's crucial to record it.

J.M.
New York

NAFTA isn't the only thing binding Clinton and the Republicans in an unholy alliance. Both want to add 252,000 federal workers to the jobless rolls, making the earlier GM layoffs seem like a preview of horror shows not yet released. The Republicans didn't hesitate to cough up \$25,000 a head to encourage early retirements in the notoriously male CIA and the Defense Department. But they're crying the deficit blues now that Clinton wants the same for the women who will be axed from the social programs he is so willing to cut. After more than 20 years on Maggie's Farm, I've seen only one difference between them: Democrats are supreme bureaucrats while Republicans are utter thieves. However, Clinton has the markings of a different animal—a wolf in a woolly coat.

Jan Kollwitz
Chicago

Clinton's speeches are really getting me mad. He claims his administration is willing to spend \$23,000 a year on housing a homeless person, but who can believe such a claim when he won't spend a nickel of government money trying to create jobs for the homeless?

Teamster
New York

The proposals to push people off welfare is one way the capitalists think they can force people to take any job at all while pumping more labor out of those still employed. It has nothing to do with "ending conditions of social dependency" as Clinton claims. What situation of greater "social dependency" is there than being forced to endure endless deprivation as a result of laboring in dead-end minimum wage jobs?

Sociologist
Chicago

I've just recently become unemployed and some of the things we've studied in Chapter One of Marx's Capital came alive to me. Marx says that capital is the death of life itself because it removes the human being from the activity of laboring. You see that even in something like applying for unemployment benefits: an automatic telephone answers, dictates questions, and even determines how and when you answer them.

Marina
New York

In Canada I see the beginnings of mass homelessness. The so-called "underclass" has grown so large that it has gotten out of hand. It definitely is larger than the capitalists would need if they just wanted to frighten other workers into accepting lower wages. Capitalism is such an irrational system that you can't assume the rulers have any set plan behind what they do. For instance, Reagan and Bush made huge cuts in welfare supposedly in order to cut down on government spending, but the savings were more than offset by massive increases in spending for prisons.

Activist
Canada

Reading the article from the General Motors plant in Oklahoma in the Jan.-

Feb. N&L really got my blood running hot. I retired from GM in 1982. I fought all my life against someone standing over me, trying to time me on the job—and now I see where GM is timing what they call "value time" and "non-value time," and if you're working less than 55 seconds each minute they want to add more work! That was the most awful thing I have ever read—it made me wish I could go back in the plant to join with other workers to fight it!

General Motors has really transformed live human beings into parts of the machine. I still suffer day and night from what GM did to me, in making me work to produce surplus value for the capitalists. My shoulders, my back, are killing me constantly. There is no labor movement today that is challenging all this. Workers for too long have let others do their thinking for them.

Felix Martin
Los Angeles

I am currently incarcerated and cut off from the battle to eliminate the repression practiced by the corporate-capitalist ruling class in this country. N&L is very important, as it is important to keep informed of the struggles that others are fighting. Until we learn to stand together as one, and everyone understands that all forms of oppression are linked, we will never achieve true justice for all. As corruption and repression grows, so must our resistance. It matters little how you choose to resist. The important thing is that you resist and teach others to resist the global capitalist system. Thank you for printing your paper. At least you are trying to wake up those who are given the illusion of choice. Until those in power no longer control our choices, they will also control the outcome of our decisions.

Prisoner
Texas

THE TWO
WORLDS OF
BLACK AMERICA

I went to a rally for Martin Luther King Day, where we heard Black leaders like Cecil Williams and Willy Brown. They said don't be against the system, but be against Blacks killing other Blacks. It's a totally false opposition. No one mentioned that Black-on-Black crime flows from the social crisis of the inner cities, which is deeply rooted in the loss of employment and educational opportunities. Does Willy Brown really think he's going to get the ear of Black America talking like that? Or is he really aiming to get the ear of white America?

Angry
Oakland

Farrakhan's politics have been known for a long time. So why does he remain such a factor in the community? Much of it has to do with the political compromises of the established Black leadership, which place them in a different social reality than experienced by the mass of African Americans. Because Farrakhan is viewed as a pariah by those who identify with the system, he is automatically viewed by many youth as a viable option to support—his reactionary and pro-capitalist positions notwithstanding.

Civil Rights veteran
Chicago

The Black community has apparently become progressively more radicalized here over the last few years. Things really escalated in November after police shot and killed a young Black man. Reports vary, but the gist of it is the guy was shot 16 times, 14 in the back. They held a kangaroo coroner's inquest last Tuesday, and, big surprise, ruled it a justified shooting. About 400 community people turned out for the inquest. It was reported in the news as "dozens." I was there. I counted. No way. The line was several abreast and stretched through almost a third corridor in the courthouse building. Very few people got in. The authorities decided to hold it in a courtroom that only held 65 people.

Readers' Views

As best I can tell, people who came in support of the cops who did the shooting were allowed in without going through the line. I didn't get in, but people saw a lot of white people being let in. The inquest went two days. At the end, when the cops were ruled "justified," they let out a collective cheer. Somehow that didn't get quite the same media play the raised fist of the guy convicted in the Denny case got.

Subscriber
Pittsburgh

The previously unpublished essay by Richard Wright which appeared in your last issue was a real scoop. His statement that "a great drama is transpiring in the tenements" and that "few people know of its existence and comprehend its fateful meaning" could have been written today. Though Wright has recently come under attack by critics like Henry Louis Gates for trying to mirror social reality in a one-dimensional fashion in his novels, the power of his perception of Black reality is unmistakable in the piece you chose for publication.

Student of literature
Illinois

FIGHTING PARENTAL
AND SEXUAL
ABUSE

These days I tend to consider myself unshockable, but I found Lynn Hailey's article on being locked in a mental hospital for six months "for being gay and for being an activist" staggering: "In psychiatric evaluations, they constantly referred to my delusional thinking being evident in the fact that I believed a revolution would change society!" Unfortunately, such dubious views on the possibility for change are widespread. What could be more crazy and despairing than believing the world can never and will never change from exactly the way it is now? I'm glad Lynn has been released and is working with Students and Teens Opposing Psychiatric Abuse Network. When I was a teenager I had no explicit political consciousness, but I did have a great hunger for freedom, I did question authority and I did not conform. I can easily picture myself in the shoes of Lynn and the other young people she talks about.

Feminist activist
Los Angeles

Many women in the so-called developing countries live and die under a reign of terror directed by their families and condoned by the societies that they live in. These developing societies have a culture "gender millstone" hanging around their collective necks. But this "cultural millstone" also finds support in Western societies. You may have seen the report that more American women are beaten by their husbands and boyfriends during the Rose Bowl game than at any other time of the year.

A.W.
Berkeley

ON TODAY'S
AFRICAN
REALITIES

The article "Crises testing Africa's Left" by Ba Karang in the December 1993 issue of N&L not only shows the retrogression among the leftist male-dominated forces in Africa, but also serves as a mirror for the situation of the Left in Latin America. Karang even mentions Cuba when he compares different countries to Eritrea on the "reduction" of women's humanity (the reduction of their self-development and self-determination).

The author's dramatic view of Africa gives us an idea of the incredible work that the oppressed masses of this continent (and anybody in the world who is fighting for revolution, for a new beginning) have to realize. On the other hand,

and contrary to what Ba Karang writes in the article about election results in countries like Angola, Zambia and Ghana, I think elections in any capitalist (private or state-run) country only retards the masses' struggle for a new beginning. Elections in a capitalist context, to vote for capitalist rulers, legitimizes the power—in all its forms—of these rulers, so they can lead until the "masses are crowned 'mature' and 'prepared.'"

Revolutionist
New York

Have you been surprised by the generals in Nigeria? That is never the case for us; we knew they would not hand over their power and privileges as gentlemen. We must never think that we will have to wait until all the generals are dead before we could expect something different to happen. What motivated the Nigerians to face the bullet of the brutal generals and their men in the streets was not a mere wish to die; a desire for total freedom is what got them so mad. You see these generals might think they have been too smart for the people. The fact is that they are only smarter than those people who have been praising them for putting Nigeria on the road to multi-party democracy.

Ba Karang
The Gambia, West Africa

DIALOGUE WITH N&L

After being out of touch with you for a while, I am struck with how philosophically consistent your group has remained. One of Dunayevskaya's phrases was "listen to the voices from below." It is from the masses, said Marx, that the true voices of freedom are heard, and I try to keep my eyes and ears open to such voices in my work as an historian. Your publication is one of very few from the days of the "New Left" which still exist. Did the others perish due to a void in philosophy?

E.L.S.
Pennsylvania

The reason I subscribed to N&L was to educate myself on your group's political philosophy. My interest in these matters is purely personal. I am an artist/poet enslaved by the notion that I must work dull survival jobs in this "land of the free." By studying anti-capitalist concepts I hope to gain insight into an independent struggle for personal freedom.

New subscriber
Austin, Texas

The East European revolts were also about gaining religious freedom from an official atheist past regime that abused people's freedom of conscience. The majority of people will not probably go along with anything similar to "Marxist" theory unless they can reconcile it with protecting fundamental freedom of religion. You should take such an approach. A more libertarian approach would do a lot for your organization.

Homeless college student
Van Nuys, Cal.

I am trying to wade through some of the theoretical presentations in N&L, but terms like "negation of the negation" are rarely, if ever, defined. What N&L desperately needs to do is have these writings come alive by replacing jargon with explanation—as some of your recent commentaries on Dunayevskaya's writings have tried to do.

Subscriber
Oregon

It is good to see N&L attempting to both regenerate Marxism and also break new ground. But if we are trying to be fully human, then we need to make time and space to handle controversies; only through analysis and debate will a human society come into existence. Many workers are reluctant to write—they do not yet see themselves as thinkers. Unless you find ways to encourage them to think for themselves and find their own truths, the common cause of workers of the world may be lost.

Pat Duffy
England

A GLOBAL RESURGENCE OF HITLER'S VISAGE?

I want to support the idea on a parallel between Germany in the 1930s and Russia today which is discussed in "Where is Russia Going?" in the Jan.-Feb. issue. It is true that the river of history is never crossed the same way twice. However, just as the German nationalists grew in the 1930s by complaining about Germany being "on its knees" to the West, so the same thesis is spread today by its Russian counterparts.

At the same time, there is an objective obstacle facing the growth of the Right in Russia which makes it different from Germany in the 1930s—the ethnic and cultural mosaic of the country. However eloquent some future nationalist leader might be, he will never consolidate the mass support which Hitler received among the Germans. Regionalism and local nationalisms are an integral part of the present Russian life. I don't want to diminish the forthcoming fascist danger in Russia. I only wish the Russian Left could employ this and other objective conditions to fight against it.

Nikolai Zelinski
Russia

* * *

In Russia, Zhirinovskiy a fascist, got elected to the Russian parliament because the people gave him the "green light," just as they did in Nazi Germany when Hitler came to power. There was no national media coverage on the fascist KKK demonstration in Springfield, Ill., the day before Martin Luther King day, as it wasn't important enough and such fascist demonstrations are taking place all over the country. The "green light" wasn't only given in Nazi Germany and in today's Russia, it's also being given in the United States.

Univ. of Ill. freshman
Champaign, Ill.

* * *

When I look out at the carnage in Bosnia, I can only think of one thing—how could such outright genocide arise so soon after the East European revolutions of 1989 seemed to promise so much hope?

Feminist
Michigan

To place any faith in Clinton's policy on Bosnia is sadly mistaken. For the past year, he and his Secretary of State have been misrepresenting the events in Bosnia as a three-sided civil war, in order to make the public feel powerless in the face of what is presented to them as ancient ethnic conflicts. In this campaign they have been helped by many reporters, who unthinkingly repeat loaded phrases like "civil war," "three-sided conflict" and "Muslim-dominated (or just Muslim) government." Would you even consider habitually attaching the term "white-dominated" to your every reference to the U.S. government and army?

The President's strategy must be seen for what it is, a cynical effort to manage public opinion. If the noises he has been making eventually do turn into some form of military intervention, it will clearly only be a token action, since his administration's goal still remains to force the Bosnians to accept an agreement, even though the agreement has in reality been imposed on them by the military aggression of Milosevic's Serbia. Such token military strikes will only be for the purpose of preventing others from taking action, both the Bosnians, who still suffer an arms embargo, and the citizens of the U.S. and of the European countries, who might otherwise put more pressure on our governments to lift the embargo.

Franklin Dmitryev
Chicago

* * *

The revival of fascism today goes beyond skinhead violence in the streets of Germany. The Larouche paper, *New Federalist*, recently printed a petition to "free Lyndon Larouche" that carried several hundred signatures including former Chicago officials, local trade union officials, a Nation of Islam representative, and a long list from East Europe and Latin America. Then on C-SPAN I saw the head of the John Birch Society lecturing a group of college students and was surprised at the polite reception he got, despite his blatantly racist remarks. The audience David Duke

appealed to is still there.

Worried
Chicago

* * *

In my opinion both fascism and Nazism have been social phenomena that now belong to the past. They grew up from specific circumstances. These phenomena cannot be repeated; the societies both of Germany and Italy have changed too much since then. The name "Mussolini" may appear at the head of a political party, but that does not mean it is the same party as it was under Mussolini himself. What is being called fascism or neo-fascism refers to movements or persons that may have some traits of "fascism" and use parts of fascist vocabulary. It is more comfortable to use "well known" terms instead of a laborious analysis of the changed "historic circumstances." In taking account of the similarities, we should rather try at an analysis that penetrates deeper into the understanding of the real situation.

Correspondent
Czech Republic

THE THEORY OF STATE-CAPITALISM



I think "left-progressive" forces can be moved by the exposure of phony "Socialism" and "Communism" as really having been state-capitalism. There was always something smelly about "workers' states" where workers had no more control over industry than workers in the West. They had no control at all—only their ability to fight.

New subscriber
Los Angeles

* * *

I have some questions as to the adequacy of the description of Russia as "state-capitalist." I tend to prefer the term bureaucratic collectivist, but I do so in the Simone Weil/Rosmer sense rather than in the Paul Cardan/Schachtman one; i.e., I don't hold it as an alternative to "state-capitalism" but as a qualification of it. Marx said of state-capitalism that it was progressive, because "only one neck" would then

"stand between the workers and socialism"; Lenin talked of "workers' domination" (through the soviets) state capitalism," and again thought of it as progressive. Though both elsewhere used the term in a different sense, these are the most widely known exegeses on the question of state capitalism from Marx and Lenin.

Raya Dunayevskaya was, of course, insistent that she was not using state-capitalism in that sense, and I accept this, but language is a matter of custom, and when her terminology is such it is open to misinterpretation. Also, in *Capital* Marx insists that capitalism can only exist on the basis of free labor; this obviously didn't exist under Stalinism, and so again the term "state-capitalism" is in strictly Marxist terms inadequate.

Laurens Otter
England

UNCOVERING NEW VOICES

One thing I found striking about the Jan.-Feb. issue was its exemplary coverage of the uprising in Chiapas. I had eagerly combed the L.A. and N.Y. newspapers for news of the revolt, and while much of the coverage was fairly sympathetic (aside from all that inane searching for "outside agitators"), nowhere but in N&L did I learn that approximately a third of the Zapatistas were women, and that there are women leaders. Only in N&L did I learn the history of revolts in Chiapas going back to 1712. I would like to hear more from Women for Dialogue, Network for Latin American Popular Education Among Women, who contributed the "Women in the revolt" article.

Finally, I loved the section on Claude McKay in the Black World column—last week on KPFK I heard an old recording of him reading a few poems, including "If We Must Die" (which today makes me think of Bosnia). I knew almost nothing about McKay and found the discussion of him in connection with Garveyism and Russia fascinating. It was wonderful to see how prescient he was about the future of Russia in the poem "We Who Revolt."

Gwynne Garfinkle
Los Angeles

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Black/Red View

by John Alan

African American History Month is now a national celebration. Schools and other public institutions have exhibitions and lectures on outstanding Black individuals. The Post Office issues stamps, and some states publish glossy tourist guides to places of Black heritage. Old radicals show old videos on Malcolm X and the Black Panthers. However, it is difficult to find a serious discussion on the meaning of African American history for today.

Recently, Cynthia Tucker, the editorial page editor for the *Atlanta Constitution*, challenged the very idea of celebrating Black history. In her syndicated column she wrote that to set aside a month to celebrate Black history "trivializes" it because: "To separate out the accomplishment of any group into a month-long observance undermines the concept that the history of all Americans is inextricably bound together."

Ms. Tucker's opinion is a good bourgeois democratic concept. The "melting pot" is the non-historical and unmediated view of how American civilization developed. In contrast to Tucker's view, Raya Dunayevskaya singles out in *American Civilization on Trial* the African American struggle for freedom as crucial within the history of American civilization. It does not melt down into the anonymity of American history, but instead places African American civilization on trial. At the same time her pursuit of the dialectic of African American liberation movements uncovers the major contradiction within the Black movement, i.e., the need to create a theory of Black liberation to match the Black masses' desire to create a new society in America without racism. The question is, under what conditions would African American intellectuals and leaders create a real theory of liberation.

The nature of the attitude that African American leadership has toward Black masses is at the root of every ideological crisis in the leadership. It was at the root of the W.E.B. DuBois/Booker T. Washington conflict. DuBois pushed for the implementation of equal rights for African Americans when they had none. Washington worked to tie Blacks body and soul to the economy of the New South as the pathway to freedom.

In the 1920s DuBois's concept of the "talented tenth" separated him from the Black masses at the very moment thousands were joining Marcus Garvey's organization. In the 1930s Black workers broke with the anti-union policy of the middle-class leadership to play a crucial role in organizing the CIO. In the 1960s Black masses spontaneously organized themselves outside of the established organizations and found a new leadership.

Today, we find that a majority of the Black leadership has embraced President Clinton's attitude toward the Black masses. When Clinton delivered his sermon in Memphis about the amorality of Black youth ruining national economic recovery, Jesse Jackson was the first to say that the President's "sermon" was "abstract preaching." Now we find that he too embraces "abstract preaching," telling African Americans to "stop using ghetto crutches to convince yourself why you can't learn.

Black World

(continued from page 1)

the haunting presence of Malcolm X, which is quite alive to today's Black youth, that drives Farrakhan and Muhammad to distraction.

But what of the disordered consciousness of academics like Leonard Jeffries at New York's City College, or the more perplexing case of an erstwhile scholar like Tony Martin at Wellesley College outside Boston, who have provoked controversy with their recapitulation of the NOI's phantasmagoric history of the supposed Jewish financing of the slave trade? Is the academic variant of this disorder explained simply enough by Marx's observation regarding the racist eugenics of the French ideologue Gobineau, namely that "to such people it is always a source of satisfaction to have somebody they think themselves entitled to despise"? In what does this disordered form of Black consciousness seek "satisfaction" if not in the self-conceit of its own particularity?

This mode of Black particularity has become a form of religious fundamentalism. Not only is the "violent ordinance of the world," for the fundamentalist, a law which oppresses Black folk and contradicts the "law" of its own heart. But because the Black community also does not follow its moral law, the Black fundamentalist takes it upon himself to impose the same laws of the world upon his own people that were historically responsible for oppressing them.

This is not only the logic of Farrakhan's demagoguery, it describes the ideological subtext of the "established" Black leadership that have made a "covenant" with him. In each case, the agenda is the same—how to bring the people's revolutionary desire to transform their conditions under the political discipline of a fundamentalist moral code or law. And this fundamentalist "law of the heart" is as much a Christian as an Islamic creation—an alienated religiosity that claims to be the "heart of a heartless world."

Of course, the politics of Farrakhan's right-wing enemy in this shadow boxing with histories of oppression, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), is fashioned along the same fundamentalist lines. The ADL has been widely exposed for its co-conspiracy with the government to spy on progressive organizations. Moreover, its own soft-pedaling of the fascist Kach party of Meir Kahane cannot be

Black History Month '94

Stop feeling pity...everybody's got a great ghetto story."

The shameless embrace of Clinton's attitude by the Black leadership means that they have internalized the political economy of American racism as expounded by the President. Since we can't expect to see a theory of Black liberation come from them, where will it come from? Without saying where or when, it should be noted that the ceaseless struggles of the Black masses are a catalyst for a theory of liberation, and have been the source of new ideas of freedom.

It is now more than a generation since the Civil Rights Movement. It's a generation of Black Americans that know that civil rights per se is a limited form of freedom in a society which is incapable of cleansing itself of the practice of racism. The Los Angeles revolt two years ago also revealed how deep the shards of racism are in American society. In many voices it said: the challenge is not new technology or the world market but the creation of a new human society.

'Race to Freedom'

Inspired by the novel *Underground to Canada* by Barbara Smucker, the made-for-TV film "Race to Freedom: The Underground Railroad" emphasizes the humanism of the Abolitionist Movement, especially the role of women.

The story begins in North Carolina where Alexander, a white Abolitionist from the North, is on his first mission for the Underground Railroad. He helps two women and two men to escape, despite being temporarily detained in jail. The escaped slaves are helped along the way by supporters both Black and white. Hardships in the wilderness and from slave-catchers result in the deaths of two, and the separation of the other two runaways, but the couple is reunited in free Canada. The woman, Sarah, has to cross two states alone, and is even shipped in a coffin to the Canadian border.

Harriet Tubman appears and argues with the white Abolitionist who tries to convince her to stop working as a "conductor" because of the new Fugitive Slave Act. She says, "To a slave, this Fugitive Law ain't nothing different from the master's whip. Now, if we ain't afraid of the whip, why do you think we're afraid of the law?"

When a runaway, Thomas, is reluctant to get on the Railroad, Harriet has to convince him to go. "Thomas, if you get caught you're just gonna fatten some slave-catcher's purse, but every slave that makes it to freedom is a hammer blow to the economy of the South."

Because Alexander must pose as a slavemaster to travel with Black runaways, Thomas gives him a lesson on how to act. He tells Alexander that what makes a master convincing is that he believes the slave to be inferior. He advises, "Don't never let your slave look you in the eye. You might see something human and you wouldn't be able to continue what you're doing." When Thomas asks Alexander why he risks his life for the movement, he speaks of how at first he was dedicating himself to a cause. Then he realized, "it's not just a cause that I've become a part of, it's people."

—Julia Jones

dismissed for supposedly being a dynamic of Middle East politics. On the contrary, the Feb. 25 murderous rampage in Hebron by Kahane henchman Baruch Goldstein had its roots in the racist politics of New York City's ethnic wars. The rightward turn of Jewish politics in the U.S. has surely provided grist for the Black anti-Semitic mill.

STREAM BENEATH THE STRAW

However, the stream running beneath the ideological debris of this straw is fed by the material interests of the Black petty bourgeoisie seeking a niche for itself in what it perceives to be U.S. capitalism's expanding market economy. In actuality, the current anti-Semitic disorder reflects the peculiar nature of the economic crisis wracking the Black community. For lodged in the interstices of the powerful contradictions between capital and labor (employed and unemployed) that have historically structured the class relations of the Black community are the mercantile aspirations of the Black petty bourgeoisie.

Unable to master the enormity of the U.S. capital accumulation, except in the desperate form of fighting for the crumbs of primitive accumulation, this opportunist stratum is equally unprepared to follow out the dialectic of Black freedom aspirations and actions of such compelling events as the 1992 Los Angeles rebellion to their revolutionary conclusions. Instead, the Black petty bourgeoisie assumes the doubly parasitic form of both eating off the same capitalist table that oppresses the mass of its own people and then coming home to the Black community to rant and rail about the system starving poor "us." (Somewhere between the "house" and the "field" Negro is this "yard" Negro whose madness confuses "us" with the alien system that has made a career of oppressing us.)

Thus in a perverse way, the phenomenology of today's Black fundamentalism expresses the perverted law of capitalist development which has concentrated Black poverty in the U.S. to an extent rarely seen in modern Western society. So alienated is the "law of the heart" of Black fundamentalists that their thought, at one and the same time, connects the contradictory ideologies of capitalist politics and economics while remaining wholly naive about the true nature of those forces in life. They instead resort to a mythological response to the social crisis, inventing "gods" and "demons" to represent those social forces they are unable to master. Once lost in this bizarre ideological forest, madness begins to set in.

Support Phillip Chance!

In 1972, Phillip Chance was a 15-year-old student at Cass Technical High School in Detroit. He and his brother, John, and his cousin, Leroy Smith, left Detroit and went to Leroy's home in Choctaw County, Ala. On Nov. 11 Leroy Smith suggested that he drive the Chance brothers to visit some friends.

While Phillip and John Chance were pumping the gas at a gas station/convenience store, Smith went into a shed with the store owner to get oil. While there he stabbed the man, Walter Drinkard, with a screwdriver and took a box containing the store proceeds. Neither Phillip nor John knew what had happened. Within hours the three Black men were stopped and arrested.

Phillip cooperated with police. Prior to this, he had never had any contact with police or the criminal legal system, and thus believed the police. Kept in isolation, scared, confused and exhausted, Phillip signed a false statement that the three had planned to rob three stores in Choctaw County and kill the people in the stores. Phillip and John were charged with murder.

Phillip's alleged statement contained numerous inconsistencies. The statement indicated that numerous people were to be murdered. One victim was killed. That a robbery scheme would be developed using a screwdriver is absurd. The "plan" to travel more than 2,000 miles to engage in this "crime spree" made no sense.

Phillip could have been tried as a juvenile but the local attorney his parents hired never made such a motion. A motion to suppress his alleged statement, the only evidence against him, should also have been made.

Choctaw County was in an uproar over the killing of Mr. Drinkard. The fact that the victim was white played a part. Choctaw County is rural with a population 50% Black and 50% white. By 1973, no Black had held an elected position in that county. On the day of his trial Phillip's attorney told him he would be facing an all-white jury, and that if he pleaded guilty he would be out in a year. Phillip followed this and was sentenced to life for murder first degree.

While in prison he was a model prisoner, obtained his high school equivalency diploma, and was a drug counselor. In spite of supportive letters from prison officials, the Alabama Board of Pardons and Paroles, in April 1981, denied his bid for parole.

In June 1981, Phillip walked away from a work release program and came to Detroit. He was working until his arrest over a year later. Governor Milliken's decision in November, 1982, again made him a free man.

In October 1993, eleven years after Milliken's decision Alabama claims that Phillip should be extradited by Governor John Engler.

On January 25, Engler stated he would not send Phillip back to Alabama if the Michigan Attorney General's office advised him that he has the discretion not to extradite him. Phillip is now awaiting the opinion. Write: Governor John Engler and Attorney General Frank Kelley to express your support for Phillip. Contact Neal Bush at (313) 962-1177 or John Royal at (313) 962-7210 for more information.

Protest 'crime summit'

Los Angeles, Cal.—Two small but important protests breached the calculated aura of unanimity surrounding a much-ballyhooed "crime summit" sponsored by Governor Pete Wilson, held Feb. 7 and 8. The "summit," designed to propel Wilson's re-election campaign, brought together law-and-order politicians and invited families of crime victims, and served as a platform for the drive to pass a "three strikes and you're out" crime bill, five versions of which are currently in the California legislature.

The bills mandate life imprisonment for someone convicted of three violent or "serious" crimes; one of them (co-sponsored by a Democrat and a Republican) lists over 25 crimes that count as violent or serious — hence "strikes" — and then over 500 felonies for which a third-time offender could be sentenced for life, including auto theft and drunk driving!

The atmosphere inside the church hall resembled that of a lynch mob, according to one protester who managed to attend the summit's opening, a "victims memorial" service followed by a fear-inducing film on how criminals are stalking our communities.

Outside in the rain, protesters from prisoners' rights groups including the Pelican Bay Information Project, Mothers ROC (Reclaiming Our Children), and the Catholic Worker, named the real criminals as a government that allows the lives of inner-city youths to be drained away, without hope of a future, and a police force that regards young Black and Latino men as fair target for harassment, beating, and arrest without cause.

"We are not saying that the grief of the family of Polly Klaas [a 12-year-old girl kidnapped from her home and murdered] is not real," one protester told a reporter. "But many of our children are victims too — arrested for crimes they did not commit, sent away to prisons where some have died for lack of proper medical care. Our youth need good schools, recreational facilities, drug treatment centers, and jobs; that's where the government money needs to go, not to prisons."

On the summit's second day, the Pro-Immigrant Mobilization Coalition demonstrated, focusing its protest against the nationwide campaign to scapegoat immigrants for growing unemployment, social service cutbacks, drugs and gangs. "We are not criminals!" was the cry; and many of the discussions on the picket line concerned the rebellion in Chiapas, Mexico, and what it meant as a new stage of revolt for both Latin and North America.

—Michelle Landau

Editorial

United States and Russia enter the Bosnia cockpit

(continued from page 1)

"national interests" has awakened the Western rulers to the need to refurbish the unity and strength of the "Western alliance." The rising power of "great Russian chauvinism," graphically demonstrated in the Dec. 12 Russian parliamentary elections, has forced the West to recognize that the decaying structures of the post-World War II world must not necessarily be laid to rest.

It is thus important to keep in mind the contrast between today's situation and that of 1991, when the U.S. launched its invasion of Iraq. Though Gorbachev tried at first to interpose himself between Saddam Hussein and Bush, the Russian rulers were willing to turn their backs on Iraq for the sake of strengthening their emerging partnership with the West. The crisis of Russian state-capitalism was so deep, and the illusion of "free market" reform as the key to unlocking needed economic growth was so powerful, that the Russian rulers were willing to forego some of their international alliances for the sake of Western economic aid. Three years later, in the face of an even deeper economic and social crisis and Western aid that largely never arrived, Russia is no longer willing to forsake its international alliances with countries such as Serbia.

This was dramatically illustrated on the eve of the expiration of NATO's ultimatum to the Serbs to withdraw their heavy weapons surrounding Sarajevo, when Russia suddenly announced that the Serbs would withdraw their weaponry under the aegis of a Russian "peace plan." As part of this plan 800 Russian troops will be stationed between Serb and Bosnian positions—a move roundly criticized by the Bosnians since the Russians are allies of the Serbs. Russia has since announced that it is willing to send additional troops to "enforce peace" in the whole of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

THE PATH TO PARTITION?

The direct entrance of Russia into the Balkan imbroglio has presented the Clinton administration with a new and unexpected factor in its deliberations concerning Bosnia-Herzegovina. One sign of this was the Russian attendance at a conference in Bonn, Germany, in late February on Bosnia—the first time Russia was invited to such an international gathering on the subject. In an effort to build on this, Yeltsin has proposed holding a special conference in Russia on the Bosnian crisis, but the Clinton administration is resisting the idea. Each side is jockeying to see who can best make use of Bosnia for advancing its own narrow geo-political interests.

What remains clear is that the Bosnians will have little say in the determination of their fate by the time the maneuvers of the state powers are over. Russia is insisting that since it pressured the Serbs to withdraw their artillery surrounding Sarajevo, the U.S. is obliged to pressure the Bosnians into accepting the partition of their country at the bargaining table. While such an outcome cannot be discounted, the fact that the U.S. is in no rush to capitulate to Russian demands indicates that a number of other schemes may first be presented.

One of these is a proposed confederation of Croatian-

held and Bosnian territories in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Clinton administration calls this an alternative to the direct partition of Bosnia into three pieces. Revealingly, the Serbs say they have no objection to the proposed confederation between Croatia and Bosnia, since it will keep their own seizure of Bosnian territory—obtained through "ethnic cleansing," mass rapes, and genocidal destruction—largely intact.

The intervention of the U.S. and Russia has thus helped to bring the threatened destruction of the multiethnic character of Bosnia-Herzegovina closer to reality. What many Bosnians refer to as an effort to impose an "apartheid solution" upon their country has come closer to realization in the aftermath of the direct intervention of the major powers.

LESSONS FOR THE LEFT

The tremors of direct military intervention by the U.S. in Bosnia have shifted the ground, disorienting many

from establishing an independent basis of solidarity with the Bosnian people's struggle for freedom and self-determination.

Many on the left justify their silence and inaction on Bosnia by saying that to do otherwise is to fall prey to the militaristic machinations of U.S. imperialism. Yet in posing such absurd slogans as "Hands Off Yugoslavia," they in fact unwittingly take the same ground as U.S. policy by refusing to extend a hand of solidarity with the struggle to preserve a multiethnic society from destruction. Such a stance is not as far removed from U.S. complicity with genocide as some may think.

No less disorienting is the response of those trying to solidarize with Bosnia who base their actions on calls for U.S. military intervention there. The tragedy is that just when the Bosnian army is recording important advances against the Serbs and Croats, the demands to lift the arms embargo have largely receded from view in favor of backing NATO air strikes as the solution to Bosnia's plight. Such a position unwittingly ends up supporting the very path which will lead to the partition of Bosnia and the destruction of its multiethnic heritage.

From whichever side one views the situation, the logic of taking the ground of existing exploitative state powers is to compromise oneself with the very forces out to destroy the multiethnic character of Bosnia. Never has it been more important to develop independent grassroots initiatives calling for the end of the arms embargo and providing aid to the besieged defenders of Bosnia in Sarajevo, Tuzla, Mostar, and elsewhere.

In light of the profound disarray that further U.S. military intervention in Bosnia will inevitably produce, our acts of solidarity with the Bosnian people must begin by clearing away the ideological blinders which stand in the way of posing a truly revolutionary ground of opposition to all existing society.

For background to the Bosnia crisis order—

Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western 'civilization'

See literature ad, p. 7.



Carnage from Bosnian Serb shelling of Sarajevo market (left); U.S. war planes under UN command (top left) escalated war Feb. 25 when they shot down four Serb bombers; while UN forces take up front line positions (top right). What next for war-torn Bosnia as the U.S. and Russia maneuver?

Native Hawaiians fight for independence

Editor's note: Five activists fighting for Native Hawaiian sovereignty were recently sentenced to 45 days in jail for occupying land that, by law, belongs to the Hawaiian people. In 1991 they were imprisoned and their buildings destroyed. They face further punishment for refusing to destroy their new buildings and farm. More occupations and protests have since occurred on various islands. Below is an interview with one of the activists.

Anahola, Hawaii—I am not a *kanaka maoli*, an indigenous Hawaiian. I have been adopted by the *ohana* (family)—they call it *hanai*.

The sovereignty movement wants our message to go to the U.S.—we don't call it the mainland. We know it's a long haul, but our message is: Please learn the real history of what happened in Hawaii.

The missionaries really did their job and became the oligarchy. The coercive acculturation started under the kingdom, before the U.S. conquest, with the missionaries' effect, and then bringing in Western laws. The Hawaiian race was dying—its population was declining very seriously up to the 1920s due to illness and loss of spirit. A second part of the acculturation began with the annexation in 1898, when the language was outlawed. They were still calling Hawaiians "savages" until the 1930s.

OUR GROUP on Kauai is in the part of the sovereignty movement that is actively going after full independence. Another element wants a nation within a nation, and there's a healthy debate going on. For us, sovereignty means the reassertion of the nation of Hawaii—the full, inherent sovereign rights to the land have never been extinguished. Queen Lili'uokalani only yielded her

suzerain (sovereign) authority, she never yielded any of the rights of the people.

It's been hard in Anahola, because this is a small community, and the Hawaiians who have leases—there aren't many—resent us. The 1920 Hawaiian Homes Commission Act split people. Until a few years ago, they'd only given out 3,000 leases, and they say 60,000 qualify. Island-wide we have a lot more support from many segments of society, including non-Hawaiians who have joined us and been arrested with us. When the Hawaiian kids come down here, their parents come over.

Since we began there are so many more land occupations—there's some on every island. The state tries to divide us. There's an organization for the lessees, the State Council of Hawaiian Homestead Associations, and the state got their lackeys in there. They just passed a resolution to evict all land occupiers.

The apology Clinton signed [for the U.S. conquest of Hawaii] shows the federal government is moving to contain the sovereignty movement. The positive aspect is it recognizes the full inherent sovereign rights have not been extinguished and refers to the national land base. It's up to the sovereignty movement to take it where it should go.

We want to restore the communal form. It should allow fertile ground to bring back balance, whether in relationship to the environment, or between men and women, or between leaders and the people. Our vision is to go to the *ahupua'a*, the ancient land divisions reaching to the sea, each one self-sufficient. All decisions would be made within the *ahupua'a*.

FOR FIVE YEARS we tried to make the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act work. We came to see how many of the Hawaiians who have 49% and down "blood quantum" have been hurt by this. [The Act only recognizes Native Hawaiians with 50% or more Native blood.] It's caused horrible divisions. At the International Peoples' Tribunal here last August, we testified that for a colonizing power to decide a blood quantum is genocide. Our position is one drop of Native blood is enough.

We could call a moratorium on any further development and immediately start reforestation and the absolute change from cash crops like sugar cane to diversified agriculture, with an emphasis on the Native Hawaiian diet, which is extremely healthy, yet the Hawaiians have the worst health of any ethnic group. We are dependent on oil; there's no oil in Hawaii, so all that has to be considered as far as what type of production.

There would be no more absentee landlords, period. There would be immediate stopping of immigration. We have a third of the indigenous population overseas, like Puerto Rico, that would come home if they thought there was a chance of valuable work and a piece of land. This is the only homeland that exists for Hawaiians anywhere in the world.

This is being discussed all over. We're in a very exciting period. There have to be a lot of different discussions with a lot of facets.

—Sondra Field-Grace

Letter to 'The Nation'

Dear Editor:

In your front page editorial, "Jailhouse Crock" (Jan. 31, 1994), there is a very curious passage: "Half of all murders in 1992 were committed by acquaintances, many of those within households. For such domestic crimes there's little protection to be found from cops, prisons, or razor wire. The great exception of course is the inner cities. There, the deadly combination of capital flight and regressive racist drug enforcement policies has bred neighborhoods dependent on the violent underground economy of drugs..."

Do you intend to imply that in such neighborhoods, "cops, prisons or razor wire" are indeed necessitated by the "tragic generation of young men unified by the experience of prison"? Not only did you, unconsciously at best, conjoin these two, but you ignored or completely missed the point. The "crime bill" you so vehemently and correctly attacked, is the product of the same such thought process.

The congressional proposal does not address the origin or the "necessity" of crime. Neither did your editorial. Both are symptomatic responses. The former prescribes amputation; your letter, chicken soup. Both ignore the fundamental reality that in this day and age, crime has become a "necessity."

The de-industrialization of this country has exacerbated and accelerated the growth of the bitter fruits of American racism. Blacks and Latinos (Let's define concretely your denizens of the "inner cities") have always and continue to be "the last hired and the first fired." In this period of downsizing even the "middle-class" are losing jobs.

The "outsiders," America's "untouchables," are condemned, dictated by necessity to "work" in the underground economy, crime. The only alternatives are to suffer the indignity of rifling through trash for recyclables or to go on the "dole" and be condemned. There aren't enough jobs.

It is not only necessary to respond to and criticize "knee-jerk" approaches such as the "crime bill"; it is far more important to bring to the fore for discussion, the real cause. Of course, I am speaking of the "property question."

—J.D.

Wave of strikes

(continued from page 3)

the past, a very acute situation developed especially in the coal mining regions of Vorkuta, Kuzbas and Rostov.

What is quite significant, however, is an idea of the Vorkuta miners. After having lost any confidence in the government—as recently as Feb. 12 the Russian prime minister Chernomyrdin himself promised to pay wage arrears to the miners "immediately"—they are deliberating now on whether to ask for the help of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. For as long as their families are starving, the miners said they did not care who is prime minister or president. They intend to strike for as long as they are not paid, including the arrears which date with some of them as far back as last November.

To this may be added an item from SLOVAKIA. It was miners there, too, who came to the capital of Bratislava. The miners and their union representatives had asked since December last year for the minister of the economy to meet them to discuss their situation and the prospects for their families. In two small mining regions the rate of unemployment is between 25% and 30%. The minister met them only after the angry union representatives occupied his building.

Essay Article

(continued from page 2)

structuralist Louis Althusser's theory of "social reproduction" of relations of domination in capitalism, and ultimately into poststructuralism.

Barrett locates the specificity of women's oppression in a dual division of labor in capitalism. The first divides men and women in the labor force, where seemingly natural gender distinctions are coupled with supposed differentiation of skill levels. The second division is between home and workplace, which characterizes capitalist relations of production but further entrenches gender divisions which existed in precapitalist societies.

Barrett insists that the first division—between men and women in the labor force—cannot be understood without analyzing the division between home and work. "The structure and ideology of the family in contemporary capitalism is surely the most salient issue for any Marxist feminist approach to address," she argues (p. 186). This becomes her point of departure away from Marx and into Althusser's theory of ideology.

She bases her departure from Marx on three interrelated arguments. First, she claims that Marx portrayed distinctions between men and women as biological and the structure of the family as natural. Second, she argues that the "sex-blind" categories of class in *Capital* shed little light on the historical forms gender relations have taken. Third, she insists that the decisive element in these gender relations is familial ideology.

Several recent writings on Marx's concept of nature have disputed claims that he invoked a 19th-century concept of essential human nature rather than a historical notion.⁴ However, a more profound issue at stake in Barrett's three arguments is her failure to catch Marx's theoretical grasp of the thoroughgoing historicity of capitalism—its specific historical dynamism—including both its constant re-creation of relations of domination and the possibilities for liberation which emerge in the process. As we shall see later, this conception included crucial insights into the family itself.

In turning to Althusser's concepts of social reproduction and ideology, Barrett abandons the concept of dialectical humanism which could have helped her in the 1990s. To Althusser, social reproduction is that sphere outside production which re-creates relations of domination that further capitalist exploitation within production. Ideology is central to this process because it shapes all "lived experience" of humanity.

Yet he misses entirely Marx's profound insight that ideology in capitalist societies is not some transhistorical or constant element of humanity, but arises from specific production relations that perversely turn subjects into objects and objects into subjects. Because he excoriates all hints of humanism, dialectics, and "Hegelianisms," he exhorts readers to skip Chapter 1 of *Capital* on the "The Commodity," especially its section on "The Fetishism of Commodities." Althusser (and Barrett) can then do little more than argue that ideology is "relatively autonomous" from the economy.⁵

In following this interpretation Barrett must look outside *Capital* to analyze gender and "familial ideology" and their relation to class. However, neither Althusser's concept of ideology nor the theories of discourse to which she later turns offer a notion of the historical dynamism of human life, including emancipatory possibilities.

In *The Politics of Truth: From Marx to Foucault* (Polity, 1991), Barrett abandons Althusser, arguing first that his concept of ideology maintained an untenable economic determinism; ideology was always explained by class interests. Moreover, she insists that his anti-humanism failed to provide a satisfying concept of human agency.

Barrett shuts the door on Althusser's anti-humanist "Marxism," and turns instead to Foucault. She embraces his argument that determinations of power relations are "polymorphous" rather than unilinear, because power is dispersed throughout society via discourse instead of located in fixed institutions. In Foucault's anti-humanism, all "knowledges," including "humanism," convey not so much the truth of human relations but truth as constructed through discourse.

Barrett also follows Foucault's claim that all subjects are historically constructed—that is, there are no natural "women" outside history and language. Yet these arguments also produce her anxiety that this anti-humanism involves too high a price for any feminist to pay—the loss of feminist politics or agency because we are all caught in the webs of power.

Caught between the "scientific" anti-humanist Marxism of Althusser and the postmodernism of Foucault, and seemingly exhausted by their limitations, Barrett stretches to a realm outside theory to solve her dilemma. What she substitutes is an abstract "humanism" of feminist values and ethics reminiscent of Kant. Instead of looking to his "men of good will" to surmount this impasse, it is as if we must become women of good will.

Barrett's reach to humanism, and her fall into this kind of dualism, fails to reveal new liberatory pathways for feminism. This makes it urgent for us to turn with new eyes to barely explored dimensions of Marx's "new humanism" which speak with striking clarity to feminism today.⁶

Feminism and Marx's humanism reconsidered

Marxist feminists often quote Marx's statements in *The German Ideology* about the family, with disagreements centering on whether Marx "naturalizes" the relations of domination between men and women, and whether *Capital* ignores or further develops his views on the family. I would argue that what illuminates the relation between Marx's comments on the family in these two works is Marx's dialectical approach, which focuses his concentration not on any ahistorical pronouncements about a sexual division of labor, but on the process of transformation of one social form into its opposite.

MARX ILLUMINATES HISTORICAL DYNAMISM OF FAMILY FORM

In *The German Ideology* Marx traces the process through which a division of labor in the family is turned into social relations which he derides as latent slavery and which appear as natural. In his first mention of this "slavery latent in the family" Marx refers to the extension of the family into a social structure of tribal ownership dominated by "patriarchal family chieftains, below them the members of the tribe, finally slaves." This latent slavery, he argues several pages later, corresponds "even at this early stage to the definition of modern economists, who call it the power of disposing of the labour-power of others."⁷

Marx returns directly to this theme of slavery latent in the family form in *Capital*. His arguments shift from

women and men. Rather, Marx seems to be arguing, such dynamism needs to be explained historically, and such an explanation is possible only if we look at the dual nature of the commodity form itself and the dialectical inversions which flow from it. Ignoring such a view, he insists, would lead us to falsely view capitalism's technological inventions as emancipatory because they reduce labor time. Immediately following this passage he expresses scorn for Antipater, a Greek poet from Cicero's time, who thought the invention of the water-wheel for grinding corn would be the liberator of women slaves.

Marx argues that capitalism's historic tendency is to continually revolutionize the labor process but at the same time reconstitute the old division of labor "with its ossified particularities" (*Capital*, p. 617). He connects this to the constant revolutionizing of all the old "natural" moral and social forms in modern society, which paradoxically re-creates the old relations of domination.

Marx goes into greater detail in the pages that follow on the revolutionizing of family relations, revealing not only the degradation and fracturing of family relations but the immanent possibilities for egalitarian relations between women and men, and also between parents and children, which would not signal a return to the "latent slavery in the family" but its transcendence.

He singles out positive features, or possibilities for new relations, that emerge in capitalism's revolutionizing the old family relations: "However terrible and disgusting the dissolution of the old family ties within the capitalist system may appear, large-scale industry, by assigning an important part in socially organized processes of production, outside the sphere of the domestic economy, to women, young persons and children of both sexes, does nevertheless create a new economic foundation for a higher form of the family and of relations between the sexes" (*Capital*, pp. 620-21).

Marx insists that it is absurd to regard the "Christian-Germanic" form as absolute or final. However, he argues vigorously against assuming that this implies any inexorable progression. Indeed, in a capitalist society this equal participation becomes not a source of "humane development," but its opposite, "a pestiferous source of corruption and slavery, since here the worker exists for the process of production, and not the process of production for the worker" (*Capital*, p. 621). Transformation is possible only with revolution; otherwise there is a return to the "latent slavery" in a new form.

EMANCIPATORY POSSIBILITIES IN THEORY AND PRACTICE TODAY

Marx's dialectical methodology in these passages has been missed by Marxist feminists such as Barrett who impatiently categorize *Capital* as a work on class exploitation whose categories have little to offer feminists. However, Marx's "new humanism" created a movement of theory which penetrates the specific historical dynamism of capitalism. In this paradoxical dynamism, all moral and social forms are revolutionized, yet this revolutionizing reconstitutes the old ossified relations of domination. Marx's theory also reveals new possibilities for human development that emerge from this process and could form the basis of new revolutionary movements.

Indeed, this drive to reveal new emancipatory possibilities characterized Marx's entire body of work, including his last writings in the 1870s-80s on such features in non-capitalist lands as which could reveal pathways to revolution—including their Man/Woman relations. This period was not unlike our own, in which retrogression in thought and reality followed an era of revolutionary movements. If we are to create feminist theory capable of meeting challenges we face in the 1990s, we have a great deal to learn from Marx's "new humanism."

To consider the family outside this context, or to focus on family ideology alone, leads back to frozen dualities of home and work which characterize feminist theory, unable to reveal possible historic pathways of liberation. The real challenge, of course, is not just a question of creating a new feminist theory, but a movement from theory which can unite with a movement from practice capable of transforming actuality itself.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

More than 80 years after International Women's Day began in solidarity with American women garment workers fighting deadly sweatshop conditions, hundreds of young Asian women factory workers in 1993 Thailand and China were sent to their deaths by inhuman working conditions as their locked plants burned to the ground.



The struggle continues!

"Six days after the first International Women's Day was celebrated in March, 1911, the infamous sweatshop Triangle Fire took the lives of 146 workers, most of whom were young women, and Rose Schneiderman organized no less than 120,000 workers in the funeral march—not just to mourn but to declare solidarity with all unorganized women workers." (Raya Dunayevskaya, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, p. 83). See literature ad, p. 7.

broad generalities about precapitalism, to the specific revolutionizing of division of labor in society between men and women within proletarian families. On the one hand the capitalist use of machinery to increase relative surplus value serves as a great equalizer between men and women, Marx argues, because it makes it possible to make use of the labor-power of both women and children:

"That mighty substitute for labour and for workers, the machine, was immediately transformed into a means for increasing the number of wage-labourers by enrolling, under the direct sway of capital, every member of the worker's family, without distinction of age or sex" (*Capital*, p. 517, Penguin ed.).

On the other hand, the latent slavery in the family has not disappeared; rather, it has been reappropriated and exacerbated. "Previously the worker sold his own labour-power, which he disposed of as a free agent, formally speaking," Marx writes. "Now he sells wife and child. He has become a slave dealer" (*Capital*, p. 519).

Furthermore, the worker who now sells the labor-power of his wife and child may briefly experience an increase in family wages, but soon he finds that his own labor-power is devalued. Previously the value of his labor-power was supposed to equal the labor-time required to support both the individual worker and his family. Once the entire family is employed that value is spread out over all the workers in the family (*Capital*, p. 518).

What is crucial in these passages is that for Marx the relations within the family do not rest on any kind of biological determinism or natural relations between

a totality, whether on Man/Woman relations or dialectics of revolution. See "Marx's 'New Humanism' and the Dialectics of Women's Liberation in Primitive and Modern Societies" in *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*, pp. 189-204.

7. Karl Marx, "The German Ideology," in Robert C. Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader* (W.W. Norton, 1972), pp. 115, 123-24.

4. For two recent discussions see Jennifer Ring, *Modern Political Theory and Contemporary Feminism*, pp. 153-60, and Lawrence E. Hazelrigg, "Marx and the Meter of Nature," *Re-thinking Marxism* 6, No. 2 (Summer 1993), pp. 104-21.

5. See Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, (Monthly Review Press, 1971).

6. Raya Dunayevskaya, founder of Marxist-Humanism, argues throughout her work that it is urgent to grasp Marx's works as

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Youth

'Reading' the L.A. Rebellion

by Jim Guthrie

The battle that began on the streets of Los Angeles on April 29, 1992, immediately following the acquittal of the four cops who brutally beat Rodney King did not end when the National Guard and the U.S. Marines were sent in "to restore order." That open physical revolt was driven underground, while the resulting battle for the minds of humanity continues.

Youth on college campuses and in inner cities are in the thick of that battle of ideas. (See "One Year After the L.A. Rebellion," by Gene Ford, a Black worker from South Los Angeles, reprinted from N&L in Nommo, a Black student newspaper at UCLA, May 1993.) That being the case I would like to look at *Reading Rodney King, Reading Urban Uprising* (New York: Routledge, 1993), an anthology of essays from well-known scholars in race and gender studies. Editor Robert Gooding-Williams says the book's purpose is to strip the beating of Rodney King, the trial and the uprising "of the aura of the extraordinary" by exploring their multiple connections to the daily "exercise of political, economic and cultural power" in the U.S.

Michael Omi and Howard Winant in their contribution, "The L.A. Race Riot and U.S. Politics," demonstrate how the rebellion served as an "immanent critique of the mainstream political process," which challenged both George Bush's call for an end to the legacy of the 1960s, and Bill Clinton's attempt to de-emphasize race to gain the support of suburban voters.

Mike Davis, author of *City of Quartz*, puts the rebellion in the context of an ongoing "full scale counterinsurgency" by the state against the inner-city Black and Latino populations. He counterposes this to a gang unity meeting where Black youth were calling their uprising a "slave revolt." "For most of them," he says, "being a gang member is no longer the thing to be. Now the thing to be is, in some sense, a liberation fighter."

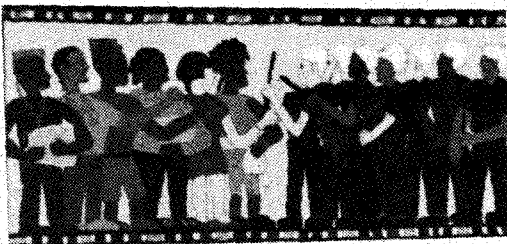
'GOOD' YOUTH, 'BAD' YOUTH

Unfortunately, neither Omi and Winant's view of the rebellion as an "immanent critique" of American society, nor Davis's description of how this direct confrontation with the state produced a leap in consciousness among its young Black and Latino participants, is developed in the book as a whole.

In the opening essay Judith Butler asks, "How could this video [of King's beating] be used as evidence that the body being beaten was the source of the danger?" She proceeds to analyze the construction of American

racism using Rodney King's body as a jumping-off point.

Like Butler, Gooding-Williams in his own essay brings in Frantz Fanon's discussion of the "black body" in *Black Skin, White Masks*. He argues that Fanon demonstrates how racial prejudice is linked historically to what Gooding-Williams calls "interpreted images." Since the racist image of the black body as a wild animal directly threatening civilization has existed in legends and stories dating back to the 17th century, the lawyers defending the cops could break down the video tape into individual frames in order to affix this interpreted image of the black body to Rodney King.



To combat this he maintains that interpreted images must be "demythified." He credits the Black Student Union at Amherst College for successfully demythifying the verdict by erecting an effigy protest linking the beating of King to the history of lynching in America.

As creative as the Amherst students were, however, when one contrasts the way Gooding-Williams discusses their action to his treatment of the actual rebellion in South Central, the limitations in his thinking become clear. Implicitly he divides "good" Black youth who are admitted to schools like Amherst and use critical thought, from "bad" Black youth who are stuck in the ghetto and who supposedly play into white society's myths about them by using violence.

His fear of "romanticizing" the rebellion—that is, posing it as a revolutionary challenge to this racist class society—puts him in a different world from Fanon who sought to work out the revolutionary ramifications of the life and death struggle of the Black experience in a racist white society.

THE FIRE THIS TIME?

Gooding-Williams's logic leads him to conclude the book with a section he titles "The Fire This Time" in which he gives Henry Louis Gates and Cornel West the philosophical last word on "reading" the L.A. rebellion.

Far from being reminiscent of James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time*, Gates's essay (originally written for the white business magazine *Forbes*) celebrates the "astonishing" progress that the "Afro-American affluent elite" have made since 1965 and laments the backwardness of Black youth today because they do not share his same notion of success. He calls on the Black bourgeoisie "to stop feeling guilty" about their wealth while the ranks of the Black inner-city poor are swelling.

Gates's disdain for poor Black youth is only outdone by West's phobic attack on them as "rootless dangling people." In his slanderous view, the L.A. rebellion was not a political revolt but merely a deep-seated rage driven by "a culture of hedonistic self-indulgence" surfacing in the form of "downright barbaric behavior."

The direct revolt of Blacks and Latinos in the streets of L.A. tore the mystical veil of democracy and civil rights off a state power which gives its police force "the authority to kill a minority." In its aftermath, we see it also stripped off another veil—the veil hiding the theoretical void of the Left who are as unable to "read" the handwriting on the wall as they are unable to "read" the new social consciousness born with the L.A. rebellion.

Racist cover ups protested at Westmont

Santa Barbara, Cal.—On Jan. 12 Matt Larson of the Westmont College Students Association, then our student body president, released a voice mail to all students. It started off with jungle music along with monkey noises in the background, followed by jibberish. It then said, "Translated: this is Kunta Kinte straight off the boat from the motherland." It was an ad for students to go with the South African Mission trip.

The next day the college president, David Winter, met with seven minority students plus Matt Larson. Each minority student said things weren't cool on campus and that this was the last thing we wanted to hear on our voice mail. Our biggest concern was how this could happen on campus. Larson said he wasn't involved in the voice mail, but had given out his access code to people who made it. He knew it was really bad and was sorry he had given out his code. We said fine.

Then President Winter got a call from Heidi Kast at the South African Mission. She said Larson did the voice mail himself. Later, Larson's woman friend contradicted everything that Larson said, showing he had done the voice mail and lied. But the next day Winter sent out a memo saying no one was considering disciplinary action.

Two weeks later he called in Sam Barkat, one of only two Trustees of color, to resolve it. At a meeting Jan. 25 with 17-20 students President Winter said Matt had admitted to him that he had lied and was genuinely repentant. This was his reason for not requiring disciplinary action. But at this same meeting Matt lied three times, which made Winter look bad. About 8-10 students spoke out asking for Larson's resignation. Barkat left the decision up to Larson, who decided not to resign on Jan. 27.

The Dean of Students, Jane Higa, who is very ill, was

Turning the Tide

Turning the Tide (TTT); A Journal of Anti-Racist Activism, Research and Education, published by People Against Racist Terror in Burbank, Cal., a local affiliate of the Center for Democratic Renewal, exposes the organizing activities of racist skinheads and other white supremacists in California. It also, moreover, is a serious journal of activism and theory dedicated to the complex questions of national liberation and racism.

The lead article, "Neo-NaziChic," is about the trend of white youth identifying with Charles Manson as a rebellious role model. Manson is known for leading a group of counter-cultural white youths who brutally murdered several people in 1969. The article exposes Manson's Nazi beliefs and practices. "His avowed purpose in planning the killings was to blame them on Blacks and try to foment an apocalyptic race war."

According to TTT, a Nazi leader, Perry Warthan, was using support for Manson to recruit youths to his neo-Nazi group. Shortly after visiting Manson in prison in 1982, Warthan killed one of his own teenage followers after he confessed to stuffing Warthan's racist literature into lockers at Oroville High School in California.

Another key article in this issue titled, "Culture of Resistance," critiques multi-culturalism for only focusing on the surface appearance of oppressed cultures such as their music, dress, and food. The author advocates supporting not only cultural diversity, but self-determination for oppressed and colonized people.

What I really like about this journal is that in all the articles they project that the very root of our society is against people's freedom and that the whole thing needs to be transformed. In the articles titled, "Exchange on Zionism and Reaction" they write, "Overcoming this key aspect [white supremacy] of a racist, oppressive society will require the mass participation of millions of people self-consciously seeking to build a better and different world."

You can reach TTT at P.A.R.T., P.O. Box 1990, Burbank, CA 91507.

—Tom Parsons

Youth in Revolt

by Marna Leber

In France, high school students joined university students in nationwide mass protests against the overcrowding and insufficient staffing of the universities which coincided with the presentation of the government's budget for higher education to the French National Assembly. The violent clashes between demonstrators and police forced Minister of Higher Education Francois Fillon to make new budget proposals for the spring and set up special committees to determine the needs for emergency funding.

Nationwide protests in Spain involving students and professors virtually shut down that country's universities for one day this past January. New labor laws creating "apprenticeships" for 95,000 16-to-25 year olds who would be paid only 75% of minimum wage without the right of full benefits caused strikers to oppose "young people being converted into cheap labor" according to the Free Independent Union of Students. President Felipe Gonzalez said his government would pursue the new labor laws despite the protests.

Twenty students at Antioch University in Ohio began an occupation of a campus building Feb. 1, successfully slowing administration's plans to create more office space. Demonstrators demand the space be used for student's activities and a dance floor.

Church's role in Chiapas

Berkeley, Cal.—Over 1,000 supporters of the Zapatista rebellion packed Zellerbach Auditorium at the University of California Feb. 16 to hear representatives of Bishop Samuel Ruiz, the liberation theologian whom the Mexican government blamed for the uprising. The two came at a time when Ruiz is preparing to act as mediator in negotiations between the Zapatistas and various social organizations, and the government.

A priest from the bishop's diocese spoke of how his church has been held responsible for master-minding the uprising, "as if the poor could not organize themselves." He emphasized that, though as religious figures they condemn use of violence by either side, they stand by the Zapatistas. He explained, "Maybe it is not our place to tell the people what is best for them. There are times when the people are ahead of the church. Poor people can be the subjects of their own history."

The second representative explained that the bishop wants to facilitate deeper changes through his role as mediator. He emphasized that the same conditions which inspired the rebellion exist in other countries, and therefore the struggle is an international one. "We are at a historic crossroad in Mexico where there is a possibility of real change," he said. "The identity of Latin American people has surged. There is a need to intensify the relationship of people on the continent."

Both representatives made it clear that the Zapatista movement is truly decentralized and representative of the Mexican people in Chiapas. They call on everyone to become involved in the solidarity movement so all of the responsibility for change is not laid on the shoulders of the Mexican people.

—Julia Jones

Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought



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Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The Feb. 25 massacre of over 40 unarmed Arabs by a right-wing Zionist fanatic was a calculated, cold, act of murder. Far from the action of a lone "madman," as Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin tried to argue, the methodical machine-gun killing of Muslim worshippers at a mosque in Hebron on the Israeli-occupied West Bank took place on the first day of Ramadan, when it was certain that a large cross-section of the Muslim community would be in attendance.

The killer, Baruch Goldstein, was a Brooklyn-born leader of the racist, fascist Kach movement. Founded by the late Meir Kahane, who was killed by a Muslim fundamentalist in New York, Kach openly termed Arabs "dogs." Goldstein first hooked up with Kahane in

Strikes in Vietnam

On Feb. 3, the Clinton administration lifted the U.S. trade embargo against Vietnam, which had stood in place since the fall of Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City). The day after, Pepsi representatives were handing out free samples on street corners. Other U.S. corporations, from General Electric and Caterpillar, to IBM, Coca-Cola, Motorola and others, are rushing in—some to cash in by catering to the newly-rich as the class gulf between wealthy and poor grows, others to get what they see as cheap labor.

When Vietnam's rulers turned to "free market" capitalist investment in 1986, foreign businesses went to Vietnam to exploit a work force that seemed more quiescent than in the rest of Asia. They are getting a different message with what has emerged as a strike wave in the last two years, especially in Asian-owned foreign and joint enterprises.

Workers' grievances include violations of minimum wage and overtime regulations, unsafe working conditions, and factory bosses who have beaten workers on the shop floor. Strikes have most often erupted in textile and apparel plants. The existing trade unions are part of the state-capitalist apparatus which considered strikes unnecessary when the Communist Party declared North Vietnam a "workers' state" in 1954, and the initiative has come spontaneously and independently from workers themselves.

Germans remember martyrs

In one of the largest leftist gatherings since the fall of Communism, 80,000 people came out on Jan. 9 in Berlin, Germany, to mark the 75th anniversary of the murders by rightist officers of revolutionary Marxists Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, leaders of the unsuccessful 1919 Revolution. The rally, organized by the Party of Democratic Socialism (ex-Communists), the youth wing of the Social Democrats and peace groups, had as its official theme the slogan "Rosa Luxemburg, Liebknecht, Lenin. No one is forgotten. Stand up and resist." Even its organizers were stunned by the size of the turnout, which was hardly limited to ex-Communists.

This news was subject to "whiteout" by the American media, and even leading European papers such as the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Le Monde* relegated the story to a single paragraph buried inside.

Palestinians massacred in Hebron

Brooklyn in the 1970s, as part of the notoriously anti-Black, anti-Latino vigilantes who called themselves the Jewish Defense League. Eventually, Goldstein followed Kahane to Israel where he became a top Kach leader, serving, for example, as manager of Kahane's election campaigns. In 1981, while he was still in his twenties, the *New York Times* published a letter by Goldstein which openly advocated "ethnic cleansing" of the occupied territories, arguing that Israel "must act decisively to remove the Arab minority from within its borders...just as the Jewish population of many Arab countries has been persuaded to leave, one way or another." That policy of expulsion of the Arabs was the central plank in Kach's electoral campaigns. That the *New York Times* would have printed such a letter also shows just how far its own position had moved to the right in that



Palestinian protesters flee Israeli troops.

G-7 face world unemployment

Leaders of the G-7 countries will gather in Detroit, Mich., on March 14 to pick up where they left off after last year's summit: the growing problem of world unemployment. The UN International Labor Organization (ILO) recently reported that unemployment rates are now at the highest level in the industrially developed world since the 1930s Depression. The ILO forecasts that by the end of 1994, the unemployment rate will average 8.6% in the U.S., Western Europe, Canada, Australia and Japan.

These figures are "official" unemployment rates which regularly undercount women, minorities and long-term jobless workers. In East Europe and Russia, the state-capitalist switch from "command economies" to "free market" has resulted in massive job losses. Latin Americans are suffering unemployment rates higher than the 1970s. The number of jobless in Africa is burgeoning while wages are falling. The ILO reports that wages in Tanzania dropped by 70% in the 1980s.

In searching for "root causes" of the decline in economic growth, the ILO refers to the "oil shock" of 1973 and at least hints at the worldwide capitalist restructuring of the mid-1970s, when Marxist-Humanism analyzed that there would be "no next boom." The G-7 delegates could get a good enlightenment by leaving their river front enclave, walking a few blocks north into downtown Detroit and talking with the veterans of the unemployed army, especially Black youth.

period, when the notoriously anti-Arab neo-conservative A.M. Rosenthal was its managing editor.

But Kach and Kahane were not the only "inspiration" for Goldstein's murderous rampage. There was a second strand of support as well. He was a resident of Qiryat Arba, an especially violent Israeli settler community on the outskirts of Hebron. There, one settler openly rejoiced to the world press over the massacre, calling it a gift to Jews timed to coincide with Purim. By the twisted logic found among such fanatics, from Hebron to Serbia to Iran, the ancient Jewish holiday of Purim which celebrates how a planned massacre of Jews by a Persian king was narrowly avoided in favor of a peaceful coexistence of various religions, is transformed into a celebration of just such a massacre, this time directed against Muslims!

Many of the settlers of Qiryat Arba, who number 5,000, apparently considered Goldstein, who was also a medical doctor, to have been an exemplary citizen. Now, even those not openly celebrating the massacre nonetheless tend to say it may have good results if it destroys the peace process, to which they are openly opposed. Previous local support for Goldstein is shown in his having served on the town council. Settlers such as Goldstein are allowed to carry guns, including machine-guns issued to them by the Israeli Army. It was such a gun that was used on Feb. 25.

A third strand of support for people such as Goldstein came from the government itself. Settlements such as Qiryat Arba thrived especially well under the long years of rightist government in Israel, from 1977 to 1992, when leaders such as Menachem Begin held that the entire West Bank and Gaza belonged to Israel by holy writ for all time. But the settlements on the occupied territories were hardly discouraged, even under Labor governments. Today, they are a source of opposition to all efforts at a territorial compromise with the Palestinians. Armed to the teeth, many of the settlers have vowed never to submit to Arab authority in the projected zones of autonomy in Gaza and Jericho.

The left-of-center Rabin government has so far refused to crack down on the settlers, even after the massacre. It decided finally to round up some Kach members, but someone let them know in advance, so only one was actually caught and arrested. It declared a curfew not only in the riot-torn Arab communities, but also for the first time in Qiryat Arba. However, it did not actually enforce the latter curfew, allowing settlers to move about freely, including even traveling to Jerusalem. It freed a few Arab political prisoners, but left the rest languishing in jail. It has refused even to consider what is the only obvious solution if one is to avoid the prospect of decades of religious-ethnic war between Arabs and Jews: disarming the settlers and moving most of them back into Israel proper.

Rabin's foot dragging ever since the September peace agreement on the plan to cede Jericho and Gaza to Palestinian rule had already turned Palestinian anger white-hot. Now, after the massacre, the Palestinian masses are with some justice calling the entire peace process a sham. The coming weeks will tell whether some new and decisive concessions by Rabin can re-start the peace process. Today, world opinion stands firmly with the Arab community, which has made concession after concession, so far without any tangible result.

Death of Oginga Odinga

We mourn the death of Oginga Odinga, one of the most important figures in the African liberation movement of the 1950s and 1960s, who died in January at the age of 82. Along with Jomo Kenyatta, a leader of the hard-fought Kenyan independence movement against British imperialism, Odinga later broke with Kenyatta's pro-capitalist politics, and published a scathing critique entitled *Not Yet Uhuru* (1969).

After attempting to found a leftist opposition party, Odinga was repeatedly jailed and persecuted first by Kenyatta and then by his successor, Kenya's present ruler, Daniel arap Moi. In one of his last political acts, he joined other opposition leaders in denouncing Kenya's fraudulent 1993 elections, in which the highly unpopular Moi was again returned to power.

In the U.S., Odinga is also remembered by Civil Rights Movement veterans for his visit to America in 1963. As an African leader whom the U.S. government was courting as part of its Cold War competition with Russia, Odinga was given a tour of several U.S. cities. When he arrived in Atlanta, a group of Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) activists met with him in his hotel room at the posh Peachtree Plaza, a type of encounter which was hardly what either the State Department or the hotel management of that segregated city had in mind. The SNCC activists had a moving discussion with Odinga, during which they sang African liberation songs together.

Apparently fired up by this encounter, the SNCC youth then went to a branch of the segregated Toddle House restaurant chain and were arrested while trying to be served. Hearing of the arrests, Odinga broke with diplomatic niceties to blast American racism. As participant James Forman writes in his *The Making of Black Revolutionaries*: "Here was a high-ranking African dignitary on an official visit, commenting that the racial situation in the United States was 'very pitiful' and that the United States 'practices segregation—which is what we're fighting in Africa.'"

Oginga Odinga's spirit lives on everywhere that people fight for liberation from racism and oppression.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her recreation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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25¢



'Business' is power over labor

by John Marcotte

Workers are invisible. You pick up the local newspaper, and you read about criminals, politicians, and movie stars. We're not even supposed to think of ourselves as workers. Politicians want us to think of ourselves as "the middle class" and as "taxpayers." Advertisers want us to think of ourselves as "consumers." It's as though all the products we eat, wear, and use every day were never made by anyone. Where are the workers?

But pick up one of the big business papers like the *Wall Street Journal* or *The New York Times* (NYT), and there you find—some workers! They can't seem to talk about "business" without being forced to talk about workers. Isn't that strange. So what is business? Read the business pages. "Business" is the power to dispose of the labor of other people. That's the secret. Nothing is moved, nothing is made without the labor of other people—not the labor of the "business person" or that new hero, the "entrepreneur."

LAYOFFS, PAY CUTS, NO FUTURE

The *New York Times* just did a nationwide poll which found: "Two-fifths (39%) of workers worry that during the next two years they might be laid off or forced to take pay cuts. And 24% said they had personally experienced layoffs, reduced hours or pay cuts in the last two years." This, in an economy which has nothing to offer most workers, and especially young people, but "McJobs" at \$6 an hour or less and no future.

The article went on about "the unskilled castoffs of shrinking industries" who now work "two or three jobs without matching their former salary or benefits." Twenty-two percent of those working are now in part-time and temporary jobs.

Another article in the NYT proclaimed, "Productivity Had Big Jump in 4th Quarter," and went on to say, "Productivity—that is, the quantity of goods and ser-

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Black World

What has Somalia meant?



by Lou Turner

A special UN report, compiled a month ago but only leaked on March 31 which concludes that the U.S. and UNOSOM (United Nations Operation Somalia) were the major causes of fatalities and injuries in Somalia during the 16-month intervention, marked the last day of the U.S. military retreat from Mogadishu. The report, gathered by a three-person commission of the General Assembly, found that the UN and the U.S. bore the greatest responsibility for the scores of casualties the Western media subsumed beneath its frenzy to demonize Somali culture and opposition to UN-U.S. recolonization.

The end of U.S. intervention in Somalia is an opportune time to examine the meaning of the U.S.'s misadventure in armed humanitarianism and what it signifies for Africa's future in the "new world order."

It is now increasingly apparent that George Bush's precipitous intervention in Somalia, December 1992, and Bill Clinton's adherence to Bush's foreign policy, was in order to pre-empt U.S. intervention in Bosnia. It is also apparent that with or without Russian competition or collusion, the U.S. is no longer able to coordinate regional crises for its own "order-mongering" ends. Whether or not we live in a "posthegemonic" world of depleted superpowers, the present global instability discloses to what extent the West's political structures have fallen victim to its own ideological pollution. That is how "the most powerful nation on earth [became] embroiled in a battle it clearly [could not] win easily against a few hundred militia commonly characterized by Westerners as men in sarongs and sandals supported by a human shield of women and children" (Mark Doyle, "Somalia: A Dangerous Place," *Africa Report*, Nov.-Dec., 1993).

Nevertheless, George E. Moose, the Black career diplomat who is Clinton's Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, believes that Operation Restore Hope "has been a major achievement" because "those images [of

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Clinton's criminal code imprisons America's future

by Jim Mills

This month, millions of families in the U.S. will turn on their televisions to see and hear a sobering public service announcement. In one gut-wrenching minute, an eighth grader, Alicia Brown, retells the dreadful day she witnessed the gun slaying of a young friend, one of four she has lost in that manner. Her sad story commands attention all the more because practically every inner city resident can tell a similar story.

It is that deep-seated fear of crime that the producer of the public service announcement—the Clinton White House—hopes to exploit when it parades Alicia Brown before the nation. Conveniently left out by the administration publicists is a total view of violence in capitalist America. While young people especially are blamed for that crisis by a moralizing government, the whole truth is that structural crises in capitalism inspire violence of two interrelated kinds—the rage of a people turned inward on itself and institutionalized violence in the form of police state conditions accompanied by abandonment by the system.

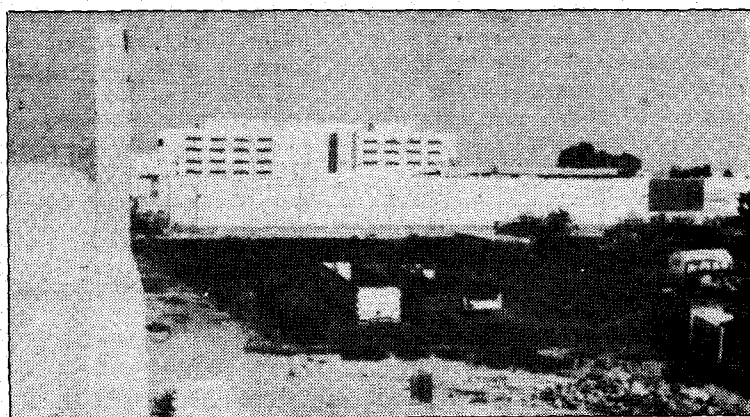
REAGANISM'S 'NEW DEMOCRATS'

The real star of Clinton's anti-crime policy is a provision—"three strikes and you're out"—unveiled in his January State of the Union speech. It mandates lifetime prison terms without parole for those convicted of a third violent crime or major drug felony when the third conviction is in federal court. Congress is now considering that and other crime bill provisions:

- \$22 billion to hire 100,000-150,000 cops nationwide.
- Ten additional maximum security federal prisons.
- Fifty-two more violent crimes deemed as federal capital offenses.
- Trials in adult court for 13-year-olds accused of violent crimes.
- Gun sale restrictions (this element of the crime bill was already passed thanks to its duplication of existing state laws and minimal restrictions).

If states pass laws at least as tough as those in the federal criminal code, they will receive \$3 billion earmarked for state-level police and prison buildups, and rehabilitation programs with any money left over.

The administration's anti-crime initiatives add to the current mandatory sentencing laws against drug offenses—which more often than not don't involve violence. Those laws have helped pack U.S. prisons and jails with 1.4 million inmates today, the highest rate of incarceration in the world and costing \$21 billion per year. In two decades, the U.S. has spent \$37 billion to build pris-



Prison under construction near Imperial Courts public housing projects in Los Angeles.

ons with \$5 billion more committed.

Clinton's punishment-model anti-crime strategy was cultivated by the Reagan White House, epitomized by its war on drugs fuelling and its shrinking rehabilitation-oriented Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. U.S. politics passed an important and ominous turning point when the "New Democrats" stole the crime issue from the Republicans, the traditional party of law-and-order. Diane Feinstein's vocal pro-capital punishment stance almost won her the California governorship in 1990 and did help her win a U.S. Senate seat in 1992. New York Governor Mario Cuomo has drafted "three strikes" into his "tough love" anti-crime platform. And Kathleen Brown, the Democratic frontrunner for election to governor of California this fall, advocates "order and accountability," boot camps, and lifetime prison sentences.

FAULTING (BLACK) 'HUMAN NATURE'

Violence now looms as a deep concern in the Black and Chicano/Latino communities like nowhere else. Exploit-

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Essay—Marx's humanism in today's environmental debates p. 5
From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya—Hegel's Phenomenology and the dialectic of liberation today p. 4
Editorial—U.S.-China human rights farce p. 9

On the Inside

Dobbs strikers win, continue to organize

Memphis, Tenn.—Workers at Dobbs International Services, a worldwide catering company serving airlines, have won their bitter, year-long strike. More than 100 workers at Memphis airport, members of Teamsters Local 667, walked out in February 1993 after the company demanded that older Black women workers in Dobbs' kitchens prove they could carry 50-pound boxes, drive trucks and load planes, or be terminated. Dobbs' strategy was to get rid of the high seniority, older workers, who would draw more health and pension benefits, and to bust the union if they went on strike.

"It's wonderful. We stayed together for a whole year, on the picket line 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and we won," said Annie Rolack, chief steward for the Dobbs workers. A new three-year contract, retroactive to Sept. 1, 1993 was ratified by a vote of 80 yes to 1 no. Workers began returning to work on Feb. 28; all the strikers have now been recalled.

'WE GOT RESPECT'

Dobbs dropped all their proposed requirements for the older women in the new contract. "We carried signs all year saying 'Respect Your Elders,' and we finally got respect," said Rolack. "We are back at work with full benefits and no loss in seniority. Most of the scabs are gone. A few are still in driving and loading, but they have the lowest seniority." The contract also provides a 95¢ wage increase over three years for inside workers and \$1.05 for drivers and loaders.

"The community got behind us in Memphis," Rolack reported. "The churches, community organizations, political leaders, everyone. All the demonstrations, leafletting and phone calls, the blocking of the bridge [over the Mississippi River]—it all paid off. (See Jan.-

Feb. 1994 N&L.) Going to the community with our fight is what put pressure on the company. Companies today don't care about employees. Once they got scabs in, they thought that was the end of it. The picket line itself couldn't win the strike.

"We got support from Congressman Harold Ford, from Bishop J.O. Paterson, from the Memphis school board, senior citizens groups, the YMCA—all kinds of organizations and churches. The greatest thing was that we went out and spoke to people and organizations. When this thing started we didn't know anything about organizing support, but a whole group of strikers, including me, learned to become organizers.

NEEDED: A UNION MOVEMENT

"Now that we are back at work," Rolack went on, "we are still organizing. At 5:30 this morning, before work, we were down at the R. R. Donnelly plant, a paper plant in Senatobia, Miss., passing out leaflets, trying to help workers get a union. I learned that we need a union movement in this country.

"We got support from our local union leadership, and Claude Brown from the International was in on the final negotiations, but I feel that rank-and-file union members are the ones who can change everything. We need to start going to meetings and get involved, not only in what is going on in our own company, but other workers' problems, too. We need to bring our children up in a unionized country where we have rights.

"I want to tell you in Chicago that the South is going to make a difference. We are not just the 'right-to-work' states. I want to thank all the readers of *News & Letters* for their support. Stay in touch," Rolack concluded. "There will be more news."

—Michael Flug

Woman as Reason

by Terry Moon

President Clinton's promise to "end welfare as we know it" has opened the floodgates of a roaring wave of racism, anger, fear, and contempt aimed at sweeping poor women and children, if not off the face of the earth, at least out of sight and thought.

Democrats and Republicans alike are simmering up a horrible brew of punitive, controlling schemes that are recipes for homelessness. Even some of Clinton's closest supporters, like Marian Wright Edelman, the Black woman head of the Children's Defense Fund, warned Clinton's welfare cabinet in what was reported to be a "blistering memorandum," that the plan being considered would "violate every standard of decency and fairness." Another official said, "If Ronald Reagan was doing this, they'd be dragging poor kids up to the White House in wheelchairs to oppose this."

In a desperate search for funds, Clinton's administration has looked at cutting welfare, food stamps and Medicaid payments to legal immigrants as well as taxing food stamps and welfare benefits. Clinton said in his State of the Union message: "We gave the states more power to innovate because we know that a lot of great ideas come from outside Washington..." This is what those "great ideas" look like now that the states can cook up whatever they want as they try to balance their budgets on the backs of poor women, children and immigrants:

'With Commander Ramona'

Translator's note: The one woman Zapatista in the "peace dialogue" with the Mexican government is the leader of the group representing the Zapatistas. "With Commander Ramona: THE WOMEN'S REVOLUTION," excerpted below, appeared in the Argentinian newspaper Pagina/12 on March 3, 1994. It was written by Juan Gelman, an Argentinian poet persecuted by both the last dictatorship and the so-called "democratic" governments that followed the long nightmare in which 30,000 lives disappeared.—Carlos Varela

San Cristobal, Chiapas—Commander Ramona is Tzotzil and she hardly speaks Spanish. For centuries the indigenous woman has been both excluded from this language and confined to domestic work in a one-room house where she cooks and lives with her man and children. The ones who besides their language speak "castilla" are the men.

Women work more than men. They have a long day's work that begins at 5 in the morning and ends between 8 and 9 at night. Just making corn tortillas—their basic diet—robs them five hours a day....They get married at 15 years of age. They often have five children. There are no hospitals and many of the women die when giving birth from complications that in another context can easily be solved.

The first Zapatista rebellion occurred in March 1993, and it was an internal one: women demanded equal treatment to men, defying the raging paleness and the sullen silence of the masculine sector. In assembly, the "Women's Revolutionary Law" was then approved. It contains 10 articles. The first says, "Women, regardless of their race, creed, color or political affiliation, have the right to participate in the revolutionary struggle in a way determined by their desire and capacity" [trans. emphasis].

Other rights proclaimed in the law: the right for a just salary; the right to decide the number of children they will have and care for; the right to participate in the affairs of the community and to hold positions of authority if they are freely and democratically elected; the right to Primary Attention in matters of health and nutrition; the right to education; the right to choose their partner and not to be forced into marriage; not to be beaten or physically mistreated by their family members or strangers; the right to occupy positions of leadership in the organization and hold military ranks in the revolutionary armed forces.

Before the rebellion, when women participated in the meetings of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), their husbands used to say: "For sure you're with another man." It seemed that the women of the EZLN needed more courage to confront these situations than for combat. They resisted.

Captain Maribel...became a member of the EZLN when she was 15 years old...."so the youth of tomorrow won't be like the ones of today. Today, we, the young, have to be soldiers, so tomorrow we can be teachers and doctors."

They really are young. Lieutenant Matilde is 18 years old; Captain Laura, 21, and she commands assault troops of the EZLN, in the ranks of which she learned how to read, to write, and of course, to use arms. She got married in the mountains and she uses contraceptives. The members of the EZLN cannot have children; the experience of guerrillas enlighten the wisdom of this decision. Also they do not have to bear ceremonies; they only communicate their decision to the command so everybody knows it.

The situation of women was one that occupied the most space in the dialogue EZLN/government. Ramona says, "Mr. Camacho also listened to the situation of the peasant women and of women in general; although there is not a concrete response to solve our situation, there is hope." Commander Ana Maria, present in San Cristobal, adds, "In the EZLN, we don't fight for our own interests, but against all injustices, against marginalization, poverty, and against the exploitation the Mexican women suffer."

Clinton's deadly welfare plan

● Wisconsin is ending Aid to Families with Dependent Children in five years, limiting cash benefits to two years, requiring those on welfare to find full-time work or enter a job-training program in 30 days with money earned deducted from their welfare check. If they can't find work, they will be assigned jobs, although Gov. Tommy G. Thompson stripped language from the welfare bill requiring the creation of public jobs.

● In Illinois a legislative task force recommended cutting off benefits for those who can't find work in two years. By September the state will force 4,000 people to work at maintenance, service or clerical jobs to receive their welfare check. Some call this "drafting" people on welfare, others call it slave labor.

● In a vicious attack on young women, a welfare check now means that the state can tell them where to live, that they must marry, how many children they can have and when to go to school. New Jersey has cut off women from additional payments if they dare to have another child; Georgia is forcing young mothers and pregnant women to live with a parent or guardian. Long Island is fingerprinting welfare recipients as if they are criminals.

None of this has anything to do with helping women and children. It has to do with getting elected and the kind of mentality brutally articulated by Charles Murray, author of *Losing Ground*, an attack on the welfare policies of the 1960s, who said recently: "A woman with small children...is not an economically viable unit. It is also not a socially viable unit." His use of the word "it" to describe a woman with children tells it all.

What also reveals the cruelty and hollowness of all these welfare schemes is that there are no jobs. Rather there is rising unemployment, underemployment, wage cuts, the substitution of part-time no-benefit work for full-time, and runaway plants to wherever labor is cheaper. Karl Marx showed that capitalism creates its own "mass of human material always ready for exploitation by capital."

What this well-funded, all-rounded attack on poor women and children shows is that unemployment in the U.S. is now so deeply entrenched that women and children on welfare—who, despite the reality, those in power insist on seeing as almost all African Americans—are now a superfluous burden to capitalism. The duality that Marx saw in the "mass of human material" was that this "unemployed army" were not only poor and suffering, but the capitalist's "own grave-diggers."

It is partly in recognition of this, side by side with racism, that the attack against women and children has been so inhumanly vicious and so intent on making women feel shame and humiliation. That they will not be successful could be seen in something as simple and small as the demonstration in Chicago that greeted the very first public meeting of Clinton's welfare reform task force in August 1993.

There women on welfare, women from the National Welfare Rights Union, from Chicago WAC (Women's Action Coalition), and NOW's (National Organization for Women) Patricia Ireland confronted the task force with the demand that its 23 members include at least one welfare recipient. The demonstration itself and the signs we carried that read "Listen to the real experts" and the constant chant, "We're not trash, we're not slime, being poor is not a crime!" reveals that element of revolt that Marx singled out when he saw the unemployed as those who may yet help put an end to this racist, sexist, capitalist world.

'Queer people of color fight to survive'

Editor's note: The following remarks are excerpts from a discussion at a News and Letters Committees meeting in Los Angeles by Julia G., a 23-year-old Chicana Lesbian teacher and activist.

I'm a member of Queer People of Color (Q*POC), an empowerment organization based on educating ourselves and our communities, and promoting change within those communities. Queer people of color have to fight for basic rights on issues of race, class, gender and sexual orientation. We're often fighting for any number of them at any given time. Fighting is not a choice, but we must fight to survive.

One of the things I see happening now is the pimping of people of color by both sides in the fight between the religious Right and the mainstream Gay and Lesbian, or Queer community. The Traditional Values Coalition of Anaheim, Cal., put out a video called "Gay Rights, Special Rights." It starts out with Martin Luther King Jr. at the March on Washington giving his "I have a dream" speech, and it goes on to pit a religious, righteous African-American community against a perceived white, wealthy Gay and Lesbian community.

They show the Black community as being all straight and being resentful of these white people appropriating the Civil Rights Movement for what are deemed in the video to be "special rights." The video tries to turn the struggle into a Black/white issue, and it works off the invisibility of Queer people of color.

The Gay and Lesbian community isn't innocent by far. They have tried to portray themselves as just being "normal" and just trying to fit in, and "we just want to be like everybody else." I think they thought the best way to go about that was to put the white face forward, but now that has backfired.

We know that the right wing has no interest in human rights across the board, but they're trying to use people

International Women's Day

International Women's Day was commemorated in NEW YORK CITY, March 6, with a march from the USS Intrepid battleship to the United Nations. Co-sponsored by Gabriela Network, News and Letters Committees, the Women's Action Coalition, and endorsed by about 35 international groups, approximately 300 persons vociferously supported the theme, "We Demand an End to the War Against Women." In celebration of the rich Herstory of the women's movement, streets along the route were named for revolutionary artists and "heroic" women. Organizational and homemade signs raised



many issues—including women workers' rights, violence against Lesbians and women of color, women's health care and women's human rights.

LOS ANGELES—On March 8, some 50 women and men gathered in front of the L.A. County Board of Supervisors building in a mood of high-spirited determination to mark International Women's Day. The demonstration, in solidarity with the struggles of immigrant women, was sponsored by numerous groups, including the Women's Action Coalition (WAC), the Association of Salvadoran Women (ADEMUSA), the Pro-Immigrant Mobilization Coalition and Mothers of East L.A.

"Since we came to the United States, often fleeing hunger or war, as women immigrants we have found that the society here also exploits us, paying us less than men for the same work," said Maria Guardado of ADEMUSA. Mexican and Salvadoran immigrant women spoke passionately about their battles against sweatshop conditions in the garment and hotel service industry.

Rosa Martha Zarate emphasized that "We are here to celebrate the presence of women all through history. We will always be fighting. We are not here to 'ask' for our rights, but to say: 'This is my place.' Women have to break all our chains."

Although the L.A. chapter of WAC has been experiencing some loss of membership, WAC's co-sponsorship of this demonstration shows crucial solidarity from white feminists with immigrant, so-called "illegal" women. One WAC member expressed her appreciation of the depth of historic awareness that the immigrant women brought to this IWD celebration—a vivid counterpoint to the stance of California's "liberal, feminist" senator, Barbara Boxer, who has come out in support of stronger anti-immigrant laws.

"Both immigrants (women and men), and women as an oppressed group, have to struggle to be free of stereotyped roles and to be able to have decent jobs, fair health treatment and the chance to build a life," the WAC activist told N&L. "As a member of WAC and of the community, I'd prefer that we as women could carry on the torch together. For us, there is the barrier of language and the barrier of the media images of immigrant people. But this demonstration made me feel more than ever the desire to learn about the culture and struggle of immigrant women and to do all I can to support them."

—Karen C. and Michelle L.

of color to get what they want. The mainstream Gay and Lesbian movement wants domestic rights so that they can then go on with business as usual, but for their own purposes they're trying now to court people of color to organize against the right wing.

The whole movement is at a critical juncture. There is a group of leftist Queer people who are trying to move the Gay and Lesbian movement and trying to get it to be inclusive, to start doing some real coalition work with people of color and start fighting for human rights across the board. But all the hoopla about Gays in the military really usurped that a lot, so there's a struggle going on right now in the movement.

Women's peace conference

Jerusalem, Israel—"Women, War and Peace: The Vision and the Strategies," an international conference of Women in Black and women's peace movements, will be held in Jerusalem, Dec. 29-31, 1994. Women from women's peace movements throughout the world are invited to share their experience in an activist conference that will include discussions, workshops, a mass vigil and march through Jerusalem, and award of the first Women in Black Peace Prize. Both activists and scholars are invited. Some subjects include: creating a culture of peace, feminist strategies for resolving international conflict, dialogue among women at war, and so on. Special invitations are being extended to women peace activists in former Yugoslavia, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, Greenham Common Women, Black Sash women and others. If you wish to present, please indicate your subject and preferred format (workshop, panel, others). For further information and registration, contact Erella Shadmi, 4/11 Dresner Street, Jerusalem, Israel 93814. Tel: (2) 718-597; Fax: (2) 259-626.

Chinatown victory over slave labor

New York, N.Y.—What was to have been a support rally on March 13 for locked out workers at the Silver Palace, Chinatown's only unionized restaurant, turned into a victory celebration. It was a joyous, loud rally of over 200 Chinese workers and their supporters, put on by the workers themselves, their independent union, Restaurant Workers Local 318, and the Chinese Staff and Workers Association which helped them.

Silver Palace bosses last year imposed a contract that cut wages from \$7 and \$8 to \$2.90 per hour, eliminated benefits and seniority rights, and required waiters to share tips with management, which is illegal. The 43 dining room workers unanimously rejected the contract and were locked out. They won this battle after seven months on the picket line every noon and every evening, seven days a week.

Chinese workers proclaimed to the rally: "You have been told that Chinese workers are shy and quiet. Well, we are not shy and we won't be quiet! This victory is just the beginning! We have a list of the restaurants that are the worst exploiters, who steal workers' tips. The bosses have heard the news and are already promising their workers back pay. We will see. Meanwhile we will keep the list."

We were told by an energetic woman worker: "It was the women who started the struggle when the boss came to them saying, 'You are old and ugly. Why don't you leave?' and they said, 'We have to find a way to struggle!'"

Human cost to get job done

Chicago, Ill.—During the same week that the economic ministers from the Group of Seven leading industrial nations were meeting in Detroit on unemployment, leading U.S. manufacturers were gathered in Chicago. A National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) survey found that the latter blamed government regulation and workers' rights for unemployment. "The NAM survey confirms a growing reluctance on the part of U.S. employers to formally hire a worker if there is any alternative to getting a job done." (Chicago Tribune, March 20, 1994)

Helene Curtis always has employed day laborers in production. The attitude toward these workers is exemplified by my supervisor's remark at one morning's kick-off meeting: "I'm going to order some more people today." He had boasted a few days earlier that a new backup agency could supply workers within ten minutes. It actually took about 45 minutes, but 30 workers duly arrived so that we could meet the production schedule.

One of the laws singled out for special criticism by U.S. manufacturers was the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The primary agency for our department, Affirmative Industries of Chicago (AIC), is non-profit, "serving people with handicaps and people who are economically disadvantaged." Many of the people are protected by the ADA so that a "history" of inability to do the work must be established in order to give them a "no return" (in effect, fire them).

A form is filled out daily by each line leader for the AIC workers on her/his line. Each person is given a rating from one to five, five meaning "exceptional," three "average," and one "unacceptable." The labor variance (the difference between the number of "man hours" the engineers say are needed to complete jobs and the number actually used) for our department has been reduced by one-third for this fiscal year, and what happens to those workers who cannot keep up on the line, who need help to do their jobs, who must be reminded often of what they are supposed to be doing, is of no concern.

—B. Ann Lastelle

Saturn troubles

Los Angeles, Cal.—Any worker who thinks he or she can make capitalism work better by joining with the management doesn't know labor history. I just got through reading Helen Fogel's article, "Trouble in Labor Paradise," on the Saturn Corp. plant in Spring Hill, Tenn. It makes me wonder what has happened to working people's minds in that plant.

Jim Dickerson went to work at Saturn after his plant closed in Lakewood, Ga. He said, "It's the best job I ever had." Another worker, Ruben Gomez, said: "We all work a lot of overtime. I was not happy working Sundays, but we needed to get profitable. We have to sacrifice" (my emphasis). This is what I mean. Karl Marx wrote that a worker who is not a revolutionary worker is a nothing.

What I see in this article is that the union leadership and the company have joined together to rule absolutely over the workers in this Saturn plant, using the fear of the plant's failure as a club over each worker's head to get more and more production out of them. An explosion is in the making there. It is overdue.

When I worked for General Motors, I thought the working conditions were worse than fighting World War II, but the conditions of labor in the Saturn plant are beyond belief. The overtime and the rotating shifts are enough to kill a worker. I remember one time when General Motors wanted to rotate the shifts at the South Gate plant in California, just to mention it almost brought on a strike. We told the company if they wanted to rotate, rotate the dumb management, and that was what they did.

I have a friend who bought a Saturn. He read this article and said he would never buy another one. Saturn won't need that second plant when the word gets around about the hell hole of working conditions that has been created by Saturn's production drive.

—Felix Martin

Picket signs had been printed in English and Chinese saying "End Slave Labor" on one side and "Enforce Labor Laws" on the other. Speakers castigated Governor Cuomo for not coming to the rally and blamed him for not enforcing labor laws against the sweatshops. The workers said: "On March 25th, we will take a coffin, symbolizing ending long hours and modern slavery, to Gov. Cuomo. That is the anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire in 1911, that was a symbol of slavery. We want that stopped."



Among supporters of the workers who spoke at the rally were: Roberto Aguilar from the Association of Immigrant Workers in New York, which represents Latino workers; Joe Taylor from Metropolitan Workforce, a Black labor organization; and James Haughton of Harlem Fight Back, which fights for construction jobs for minorities.

Other supporters were "the new generation of Asian American students" from high schools and colleges, who had invited the workers to speak in their classes. "We have mothers who are garment workers, fathers who are restaurant workers; some of us have worked in the restaurants ourselves. The Silver Palace is a great victory, but there are thousands out there, and you will find the youth out there," said a Brooklyn College student.

—Supporter, New York local, News and Letters Committees

One big temp pool

Chicago, Ill.—All labor is becoming temporary part-time labor at every job. At Toys-R-Us they consider 30 hours full time. They make it sound really great when they "give" you a little more, like 35 hours. They're getting rid of as many so-called full-timers as possible by doing everything to get us mad to make us quit or get fired.

When the boss okays more hours, instead of giving the young men we have more hours, they hire three more people, each to work one or two days per week. They'll sweat them double-time and hope they will eventually quit, because what can you do with one or two days' pay?

They want to make do with the absolute minimum number of workers. Where one guy had one job, like building bikes, they now expect him to cover that, plus unload trucks, plus run merchandise out to the sales floor. We're working a hell of a lot harder for the same pay. One guy, for example, has been here three years and is not making even \$5 an hour yet. Where the trucks used to come in palletized, now they load them on the floor from head to tail and to the roof. There are not enough people to off-load the trucks, and yet they keep calling us to take stuff out to the floor.

For older workers, these part-time jobs mean you end up with a whole mess of temporary jobs. For younger workers it means living with your parents a lot longer than you would have or moving back in. You can't afford to leave home. You can't afford anything. We're all one big temp pool of workers, that's all we are.

People are mad. Management thinks they're going to sweat more out of us, but that makes us want to do less. The best way is to follow their orders. They want us as mindless automatons—well, it works better for us that way. You get me so pissed, I will do exactly what you tell me and nothing more. And we'll do it to the letter. If there is a loophole, we'll drive a truck through it.

—David L. Anderson

The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism

"The reduction of various kinds of labor to abstract human labor.... This specific social form of labor as an abstract universal.... becomes the differentia specifica of the capitalistic form of production.... Just as in society 'mere man' plays but a shabby part, so in the capitalist labor process it is not the laborer that is the subject of production, but the mere expenditure of his labor power."

—Raya Dunayevskaya

"Notes on Chapter 1 of Marx's Capital"
For information on ordering, see page 7.

Teamsters vote to strike

New York, N.Y.—There may be a nationwide trucking strike as you read this. Every driver and dock worker I know voted "yes" on March 18 to authorize a strike. We received the following information from our Teamsters local union regarding the National Master Freight contract due to expire March 31:

"...by their actions at the negotiation tables, the trucking companies management were telling all our members to GO TO HELL."

"Some of their demands are as follows:

- To expand the number of offenses that an employee could be immediately terminated for from 7 to 17, including one for 'dishonesty' which could be as simple as putting the wrong time down on your trip sheets.
- To do away with all job classifications so that they could order anyone to do anything.
- To have permanent part-timers.
- To be able to start bids at any time of the day, 24 hours a day, any day of the week. All those not on a bid would be required to stay by the phone 24 hours a day waiting for a call which would allow you only two hours' notice to get to the job.
- To be able to pay straight time for working on Saturdays and Sundays.

"...Throughout the entire country these employers are refusing to move off their 'take-away' proposals. To add to this, the employers stated that whatever they had on the table as of 11:59 p.m. on March 31, 1994 should be considered their final offer. This would, by law, make all those proposals become our new 'contract' until something else was agreed upon..."

The immediate reaction of workers old and new was to vote to strike if need be. One commented that working under such a contract "would be like being in prison. You'd feel you were being watched all the time"; another, that "it would be like not having a union."

Workers said that once you give up a concession, you never get it back: "Look at UPS (United Parcel Service). They're half part-timers now." They said letting the freight companies use part-timers "would be the end of the job. Then no one would be on the list." ("The list" is the seniority list, meaning permanent and full-time.) There is no way we will accept such a contract.

—Freight Teamster

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

vices that the nation's workers produce in a given hour—rose at the annual rate of 6.1 percent." Someone measures how much we produce in one hour, and this is important at a national level! I thought workers were not important. But wait. How is this good productivity achieved? After all, we are constantly told that the high productivity of the U.S. workers is what has given us our "high standard of living."

This productivity was achieved through "the layoffs of thousands of workers considered a drag on efficiency." So we produce everything, but we are a "drag on efficiency"! Everything is upside down! "There have been 60,000 layoffs in telecommunications alone this year," Stephen S. Roach, senior economist at Morgan Stanley and Co., said. "That is not job shifting: that is upheaval." At last someone talks about the "upheaval" we are living in our flesh and blood and lives! But I don't think he means it that way.

PRODUCTIVITY AND NEW JOBS?

Edwin Dean, chief of the productivity division (yes, there is such a thing—your productivity and mine really matter to this great government!) at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, said, "One can explain a lot of this improvement by noting that...people have simply worked harder to fill all the orders." Well, I see that what is improvement to you, Mr. Government and Mr. Boss, is harder work to me!

Mr. Roach was then quoted: "Clinton has to deliver on his promise of 8 million new jobs to get re-elected. But if companies keep laying off and downsizing, he has a problem." No matter who is president there is no way he or she can buck this trend of business towards ever greater "productivity." That is our future.

Then I read the headline of another article, "Clinton to Unveil Jobs Bill that Focuses on Retraining," and I don't know if I want to laugh or get sick at the outright hypocrisy of these leaders. Their own Labor Department is telling them we need more productivity, in other words more layoffs, and these cynics want to pretend they will create jobs. They CANNOT.

CONTROL OVER OUR LIVES

The article on productivity noted, "The Labor Department said that unit labor costs—the labor cost to produce a car, a pair of shoes or some other product or service—had declined in the 4th quarter at an annual rate of 3.1 percent." Our happy Mr. Roach was ecstatic over this: "It has been 31 years since we have had two consecutive quarterly declines in unit labor costs. That indicates extraordinary control over labor costs."

Somehow this "extraordinary control" which he is so happy about sounds terrible to me. I picture police breaking up a picket line, scabs streaming, in and NAFTA. It is "control" over our lives, business being the power to dispose of the labor of others. As long as there is this power, we are not free.

No wonder they don't print articles like this in the New York Post. Workers reading it would only get gloomy. Oh, I forgot. There are no workers in America anyway. We're all happily middle-class, aren't we?

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya Marxist-Humanist Archives

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

Editor's note: As part of the classes News and Letters Committees is holding on "Why Hegel's Phenomenology? Why Now?" we publish another document on this work of Hegel's—excerpts from Raya Dunayevskaya's speech of Dec. 5, 1976, entitled "Hegel, Marx, Lenin, Fanon and the Dialectics of Liberation Today." In this speech Dunayevskaya explored each of Hegel's major works in relation to the views of such thinkers as Frantz Fanon, Herbert Marcuse, Jean-Paul Sartre, Georg Lukacs and Theodor Adorno. Due to space, we here publish excerpts of the first section of the talk, which deals with Hegel's Phenomenology. The full document can be found in the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, microfilm #15024, or can be ordered directly from News & Letters.

We want to begin immediately with both masses in motion and the self-determination of the Idea, in order to stress that there is a single dialectical process in both thought and activity. And that single dialectical process is the Absolute Method, that is, the dialectical method of revolution—whether in thought, or in fact—and in both is what we're after.

In order to stress that fact, it is important to see that even though Hegel was a bourgeois philosopher, and the greatest that ever lived, he was not as abstract as his great philosophic works make him appear, if you follow only various stages of consciousness, or if you follow only the philosophic categories. In fact, every philosophic category stands for a strict period in history, all of which covers the vast amount of 2,500 years of history. (In other words, so far as Hegel is concerned, it all began 500 B.C. with Greek philosophy, through the French Revolution, which is the period in which he lived.)

Because this single dialectical process is historic, and because I want you to see that it isn't something that Marx "added on" to what Hegel said, but is in Hegel, I want to begin with Hegel's statement that no idea is worth being called an idea unless it's an idea of freedom: "When individuals and nations have once got in their heads the abstract concept of full-blown liberty, there is nothing like it in its uncontrollable strength, just because it is the very essence of mind, and that as its very actuality....The Greeks and Romans, Plato and Aristotle, even the Stoics, did not have it....If to be aware of the Idea—to be aware, i.e., that men are aware of freedom as their essence, aim, and object—is a matter of speculation, still this very idea itself is the actuality of men—not something which they have, as men, but which they are." This appears not in an inconsequential essay, but directly in his highest book, *Philosophy of Mind* [para. 482].

There has to be a reason for our study a lot more urgent than what is encompassed by the word "relevance"—"Hegel's relevance for our day"—and that is the TODAYNESS of the Hegelian dialectic, and of Marx's new continent of thought, that emerges out of two elements: both the movement from practice to theory and the movement from theory to practice. In order to get it, to grasp it, not only at its roots, but its ramifications for our day, we have to grasp Marxism in its original state, in its original philosophy, which by no accident Marx called "a new Humanism." We must grasp this free from all distortions of Marxists, whether it's post-World War I, or post-World War II, or post-Marx.... Along with that we also have to get the origin and specificity of Hegelian dialectics, because again, it is no "accident" that Marxism is based on Hegelian dialectics, and that Marx considered that the source of all dialectics, his own included.

For us, Marx's Humanism is on the basis of our day, which began in the 1950s, with the upsurge for the first time ever from under totalitarian Communism—the East German Revolution [of June 1953]—and this spread all through the globe, Latin America, Africa, and so forth. The concrete specific form for our day of the Hegelian dialectic, and our original contribution, is Ab-

solute as new beginnings. Those three little words—as new beginnings—tell you that it's our day and no other day, and we will have to come through and understand this—not only because it's our original theoretic contribution, but because this is the reality of what happened in life, the momentous world historic events of the last two decades.

"Absolute as new beginnings" happened in life, when the Hungarian revolutionaries [in 1956], and first the East Germans [in 1953], brought Marx's Humanist Essays from the dusty library shelves onto the historic stage of new freedom, and they were also so in thought—maybe not quite the way we are saying it, though you will see that it's not too far removed. "Absolute as new beginnings" was clear to those who recog-

nized this passion for freedom and operated as revolutionaries. I'm referring specifically to Frantz Fanon.

od, which is reactionary, and what Hegel called the Third Attitude to Objectivity.

IS RETROGRESSION PART OF THE DIALECTIC?

So what is the dialectic but the movement of both ideas and of masses in motion towards the transformation of reality? This is in contrast to the lack of all meth-



The storming of the Bastille in 1789

nized this passion for freedom and operated as revolutionaries. I'm referring specifically to Frantz Fanon.

FANON'S INSIGHT INTO HEGEL

There were two stages in Frantz Fanon's development that concern us.... One is the section of *Black Skins, White Masks* where Fanon takes up "The Negro and Hegel." Hegel didn't take up the Negro question—and that is exactly what Fanon said was wrong. What Hegel took up in the *Phenomenology of Mind* is the relationship of labor to the master. Hegel's great theory of alienation was that precisely because the slave was "nothing," and had to do everything the master said, had to do all the labor—precisely through his labor, the slave got a mind of his own, an attitude to objectivity of his own, a challenge to the person who was everything but who really had nothing.

But Fanon said, nevertheless, these two opposites were not as totally absolute as they would have been had Hegel considered the Black dimension. Involved in this dialectic of the relationship of master to slave, as Hegel postulates it, was still the essence of some reciprocity—somewhere on the way to a mind of your own, you would be able to force some recognition of yourself, as man, as woman, and not just as slave, from the master. But, says Fanon, Hegel didn't consider the Black—and it isn't the least bit true that the master is interested in the Black at all.

The really Absolute, where there is no reciprocity, is this slave who in addition to being a slave, in addition to being the exploited laborer, is Black, and is not at all recognized by the Other. Therefore, the dialectic would have to be much sharper, and see a certain transformation of reality which was deeper, than that of Hegel.

In our age there is Sartre, and he is Left, and he is a good friend [of Fanon], and he is trying to establish a new philosophy for our age, which he calls Existentialism. But look what he does with those three major categories of all of philosophy, Individual, Particular, and Universal. There is a movement from the abstract Universal, through the Particular, supposedly to the concrete, the Individual, who would be absolutely free, and the only proof that the Universal was a reality and not just a thought. But what does Sartre tell Fanon in "Black Orpheus"? He tells him that Black is only a Particular, a "minor term" in these three terms.

Fanon does two things in this particular section, "The Fact of Blackness." One is that he quotes the other West Indian, Aime Césaire's "Return to My Native Land," in which he tries to show the difference of the dialectic when it comes not from knowledge but from anguish: "Those who invented neither gunpowder nor the compass/ Those who never learned to conquer steam or electricity/ Those who never explored the seas or the skies/ But they know the farthest corners of the land of anguish."

He goes on to explain that that is what makes them the revolutionaries, and what makes them strive for this philosophic expression as one of revolution. Whereupon he then quotes Sartre, on Black being only a minor, particular term, and he says: "[Sartre] was reminding me that my blackness was only a minor term. In all truth, in all truth I tell you, my shoulders slipped out of the framework of the world, my feet could no longer feel the touch of the ground."

The point is that at momentous historic moments what we call a passion for philosophy is actually the passion for freedom, which strives to acquire, to find, a phil-

od, which is reactionary, and what Hegel called the Third Attitude to Objectivity.

We always speak of how, under the impact of the French Revolution, Hegel had put to method the actual activity of masses in motion, the *sans culottes* in France, and so forth, and called it the dialectic. But in this period there was not only revolution, but counter-revolution, and we had not the millenium, but Napoleon. So why do we only talk of the response to the French Revolution, the discovery and development of the dialectical method in Hegel, and not speak about what happened on the question of counter-revolution, on the question of what Hegel himself called reactionary moves? The philosophic expression of this tendency specifically concerns Jacobi.

In 1807, when he wrote the *Phenomenology of Mind*, Hegel had, so to speak, laughed at Jacobi. He didn't take him very seriously, or deal with him at great length. He mentions Jacobi in passing, as part of the culture of what's called the Beautiful Soul, where the people had already gained minds of their own, and they have civilization, and they have the Enlightenment, and they have culture—and nobody's happy anyway....

By 1812, when he writes *Science of Logic*, Hegel doesn't any longer just talk of Jacobi as the Beautiful Soul....He now says, perhaps you have already forgotten Jacobi, he was just a minor philosopher, nevertheless it's important to recognize what he represented.

....At the end of Hegel's life, [1830] ...Jacobi gets an entire section [in the *Encyclopaedia Logic*], the Third Attitude to Objectivity. What had happened in those years that made Hegel change his mind? What prompted Hegel to devote an entire section to someone who was supposed to be so minor that he may have already been forgotten?....

Hegel sees that the movement isn't always upward and onward—there is a retrogression. You come to a certain point, and instead of really transforming reality, and giving your life for it, suddenly you begin to say, it's really Faith, and you go backward. So that idea, that this late in life, after the Enlightenment, after the French Revolution, you can still say, not philosophy, but Faith, God, let's go back to that—that is the reactionary movement.

Hegel recognized this, and in 1914, in a much sharper way, Lenin recognized the same thing also, with the breakdown of the Second International—counter-revolution is within the revolution, something is crazy, and we really have to transform all this through revolutionary movement.

We have to therefore keep in mind that...the lack of method, the lack of trying to see what you should actually do—suddenly you're giving it back to Faith—that is the reactionary movement.

So with all these beautiful syntheses that are supposed to be in Hegel—the Absolute Knowledge of the *Phenomenology of Mind* as the unity of Science and History, the Absolute Idea in *Science of Logic* as the unity of Theory and Practice, and the Absolute Mind in *Philosophy of Mind* as the unity of the Objective and the Subjective—what happens, if there is really also retrogression? What is going to be done to stop it, to overcome it, to transcend it? Even before Marx had brought in a whole new continent of thought....Hegel had recognized this by...hitting on Jacobi as the person and the Attitude that is shown when the revolution has not been transformed into a new society.

We have, therefore, in this introductory presentation: (continued on page 9)

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Essay Article

Marx's humanism in today's environmental debates

by Franklin Dmitryev

Today's mass environmental movements give us a new vantage point from which to re-examine Marx's 1844 Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts on their 150th anniversary. New questions have been raised about the social roots of ecological problems, the need for a new concept of development, and the separation between theory and practice.

Contending theories have tried to reconcile society with nature by demanding humanity surrender any hope of freedom in humble submission to "natural" dominion¹, or by abandoning the challenge to unfree human institutions and simply trying to minimize their destructiveness to nature², or by posing an external mediator to harmonize them.³

MARX'S METABOLISM WITH NATURE

One thing today's ecological movements allow us to see in Marx is the illumination the concept of alienated labor casts on the question of alienation from nature. To Marx, writing in the essay "Alienated Labor," alienated labor is alienation from one's own activity, and is therefore self-alienation. Alienation from nature is one of the moments of that self-alienation.

Overcoming it requires the reintegration of one's own activity, or in Marx's words, the appropriation of human essence. One crucial moment of human activity is our metabolic interchange with nature. The current degradation is an irrational, alienated, and therefore unsustainable relationship to nature. It is alienation from one's own activity, and therefore from the metabolism with nature.

Under capitalist alienation, all human relations are reified, turned into things. That includes the metabolism with nature, which, in its capitalist form, is manifested as two processes that seem to have lives of their own: first, an insatiable consumption of natural resources; second, an ever-growing waste monster, which can be appeased for a time with recycling, or can be drowned or buried, but rises from its grave, to invade our soil, air and water like a zombie army. No matter how we try to contain it, the waste monster inevitably bursts its bonds.

That is only one manifestation of the "alien and hostile force"⁴ which confronts humanity and which humanity must conquer; that force is not nature but the product of alienated labor. What Marx had in mind above all was the machine in the factory, "the product of labor as an alien object which dominates" the worker. "This relationship is at the same time the relationship to the sensuous external world, to natural objects, as an alien and hostile world" (pp. 125-26), even though human beings are part of nature.

The young Marx did not yet use the word "metabolism." In his 1844 Manuscripts he expresses this concept as humanity's need for a "continuous interchange" with nature as a social process, of which industry is an expression. Later, in *Capital* and the *Grundrisse*, Marx appropriates the chemist Justus von Liebig's term "metabolism [Stoffwechsel]." Marx, who has analyzed the reduction of the worker to an appendage of the machine, rejects the 19th century's dominant metaphor for natural processes and human body, mind, and society—the machine—and adopts instead an organic metaphor.

In particular, he shows in *Capital* how the mechanization of agriculture and industry, and the resulting urban concentration of the population, impede the cycle of the return to the biosphere of waste from human consumption, such as sewage, rags, and so on. This disturbs the human metabolic interaction with nature, hindering "the eternal natural condition for the lasting fertility of the soil."⁵

However, he does not see the reintegration of that metabolism as merely a return to a pre-industrial state of nature, but insists that the metabolism, too, must be revolutionized. Over the years he expresses that variously: for example, in 1844 as "appropriation of nature," and in the *Grundrisse* as "human mastery over the forces of nature." The Green tradition is to take such phrases out of context to "prove" Marx advocated "domination of nature," but not explain what that means.

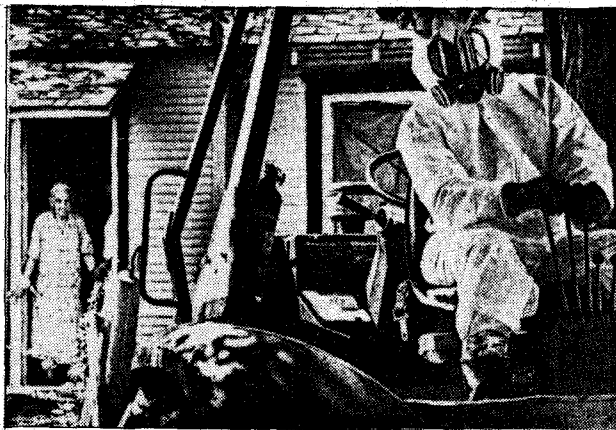
MARX'S CRITIQUE AND RE-CREATION OF THE HEGELIAN DIALECTIC

It seems to me that Marx's body of ideas as a whole points rather to a concept of transcending the alienation of humans from nature, a reintegration with nature, which finds its most precise expression in *Capital*. Socialized humanity would "govern the human metabolism with nature in a rational way," he writes in Vol. 3 of *Capital* (Vintage, 1981, p. 959).

In the passage of Vol. 1 discussed above on mechanization of agriculture, Marx does not stop at pointing out

the capitalist breakdown of the metabolism with nature. He writes that this situation compels metabolism's "systematic restoration as a regulative law of social production, and in a form adequate to the full development of the human race" (p. 638).

The few post-Marx Marxists who have paid attention to this crucial passage have tended to dismiss the last phrase, not grasping the integrality Marx is posing between human liberation and the restoration of a rational relationship with nature. Without this integrality, Marx's concept of nature is lost. As Raya Dunayevskaya points out, Marx's critique and re-creation of the Hegelian dialectic never lets go of "transcendence as objective movement."⁶ His vision is not to eliminate or even minimize humanity's impact on nature, but rather to achieve conscious, freely associated, planned, social control of the ways in which that impact occurs, so that it is not a



EPA worker removes lead-contaminated debris from the yard of West Dallas Latina resident.

destructive impact, but one that provides a foundation for human self-development.

Appropriation of nature is to Marx "appropriation of human essence by man and for man, is the return of man to himself as social, i.e., human man, complete, conscious and matured within by the entire wealth of developments to date. Just as completed humanism is naturalism, so this communism, as completed naturalism, is humanism. It is the true solution of the strife between man and nature, and between man and man."⁷

Marx's critique in these manuscripts shows that neither the relationship of man to woman, nor that of humanity to nature and to the community, nor a person's needs, capacities and labor, have yet become fully human. His vision is that they can become fully human through the simultaneously social and individual act of humanity reuniting itself with itself in all of these dimensions, and that precisely is the innermost meaning of social revolution.

In contrast to Hegel's concept of subject, which Marx criticizes as being abstracted from nature, Marx has created his own concept, which does not separate nature from thinking, self-developing, self-liberating human beings. The subject in Marx is something natural and at the same time specifically human. It is "actual corporeal Man, standing on firm and well-rounded earth, inhaling and exhaling all natural forces....[The subject] is the subjectivity of objective essential capacities, whose action must, therefore, also be objective."⁸

This subjectivity is of course that of the human individual as subject, but also includes the power of thought,

6. *Philosophy and Revolution, from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 54.

7. "Private Property and Communism," by Karl Marx, in *Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today* (Bookman 1958), p. 293. A more contemporary translation would replace words like "man" with gender-inclusive words like "human being."

8. "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," by Karl Marx, in *Marxism and Freedom*, p. 313.

which is an objective essential human capacity to transform the world in accordance with the idea—especially when it is an essential human idea, that is, freedom.

WHAT KIND OF DEVELOPMENT? WHAT KIND OF LABOR?

Marx's 1844 exposition of his concept of the "human natural subject" is extended in his 1867 *Capital*, whose section on "The Labor Process" is discussed below. It offers a Hegelian view of labor as the self-production of humanity. At the same time it transcends Hegel through its full grounding in the concept of humanity's metabolism with nature. Thus for Marx, human development is not merely "economic" but the dialectic of liberation.

The very question of "What is development?" has been raised profoundly by the movement from practice, from the Zapatista struggle in Chiapas, Mexico, to the fight against the placement of an incinerator in Robbins, Illinois. The questions go beyond just the economic to what kind of development is truly human and not just the self-expansion of capital.

Various tendencies have tried to formulate theories capable of responding to this challenge from practice. Of special importance is Ted Benton, who finds a "naturalistic" dimension in Marx, yet at the same time argues the necessity of its critical reconstruction as a "Green Historical Materialism."⁹ While most post-Marx Marxists have ignored this aspect of Marx, Benton sees that it comprehends humanity as "dependent upon nature-given material conditions," living within natural limits.

However, in his view Marx's economic theory doesn't take sufficient account of natural limits to human activity. Benton concentrates his "ecological reconstruction" of economic theory on the concept of the labor process laid out in Chapter 7 of Vol. 1 of Marx's *Capital*.

Here Marx examines the labor process, not just in capitalism but in general. Benton is especially taken with one sentence from this chapter: "The simple elements of the labor process are (1) purposeful activity, that is work itself, (2) the object on which that work is performed, and (3) the instruments of that work" (p. 284). He interprets this as a "model" of the labor process.

In this "model," the conceptual "structure" of the labor process is supposedly determined by its purpose alone. This "intentional structure...is, for Marx, a transformative one," that is, human labor intended to cause a transformation of an object to yield a use-value.

Benton counterposes humanity's transformative powers to natural limits. He contends that the "model" does not fit certain types of labor—"eco-regulatory," like agriculture, and extractive, like fishing—which are distinguished from "transformative" labor by their dependence on natural conditions that are "relatively impervious to intentional manipulation."

Marx's discussion here is not restricted to the general labor process, a feature of all societies. The second half of the chapter describes the production of surplus-value, which only occurs in capitalism. The commodity has a dual character as both a useful thing and at the same time a value. Labor in commodity production therefore has a dual character too, which Marx calls concrete labor, the activity of making something useful, and abstract labor, the production of values.

To Benton, value production is one more "intentional structure," superimposed on and predominating over those he has identified as transformative, eco-regulatory and extractive. With value production reduced to the capitalist's "intention," there is no room for the question of what kind of labor produces value, so he has absolutely no mention of alienated labor, the core of Marx's philosophy and his economics.

By posing value production as an "intentional structure" parallel to the technical branches of production,

(continued on page 8)

9. "Marxism and Natural Limits: An Ecological Critique and Reconstruction," *New Left Review*, November/December 1989, pp. 51-86.

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• Class 1 •

**The Todayness of
Marx's Origins in Hegel**
The Preface and Introduction to
Hegel's *Phenomenology*

• Class 2 •

The Master/Slave Dialectic
Labor, the Black and Latino Dimensions,
and Women's Liberation

• Class 3 •

The Pitfalls of False Consciousness
Stoicism, Skepticism, and
the Unhappy Consciousness

• Class 4 •

Spirit in Self-Estrangement (I)
Fetishisms of State Power, Culture and
"The Party"

• Class 5 •

Spirit in Self-Estrangement (II)
What Happens After the Revolution?

• Class 6 •

Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy
The "End of History" versus
Philosophic New Beginnings

1. This "deep ecology" approach is exemplified in *The End of Nature*, by Bill McKibben (Random House, 1989).

2. For instance, "sustainable development" theories have not gotten beyond Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland's assumption that capitalism and its "market" constitute a law of nature. See *For the Common Good* by Herman Daly and John Cobb (Beacon Press, 1989).

3. Murray Bookchin's eco-anarchism relies on his detailed plan for social organization, which leaves no room for living human beings to work out their own self-organization; see *The Ecology of Freedom* (Cheshire Books, 1982). The eco-socialism of James J. O'Connor depends on "democratizing the state," so it can mediate; see *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, Fall 1988, pp. 11-38.

4. "Alienated Labor," in Karl Marx: *Early Writings* (McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 123.

5. *Capital*, Vol. 1 (Vintage, 1977), p. 637.

CHIAPAS AND THE UNIVERSALITY OF FREEDOM

At the heart of the question the Lead article in the March issue asks—is the rebellion in Chiapas a new form of struggle?—lies something evinced throughout the whole issue. That is the idea of possibility, the possibility of social transformation on new and truly human grounds....

The discussion of Marx's last writings in the last chapter of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* helps shed light on the events in Chiapas, in pointing to what was the determining concrete for Marx, "the ever-developing Subject." In Chiapas that is specifically the revolutionary subjectivities of the indigenous people. Rather than viewing capitalism/imperialism as a necessary stage the Third World had to endure to reach socialism, Marx viewed the struggles against them as the determinant for the village commune to become the basis for a Third World socialism. Is the groundwork for socialism in the Third World present within the struggle to regain control of communal lands in Chiapas?

Graduate student
Chicago

The article, "Native Hawaiians fight for independence," was very important to see in *News & Letters*. The struggle of Native peoples has the potential to unite people around the world because the universality of the demands for human dignity, for land, for freedom and for the right to work out their own future speak loudly to the Maori people in New Zealand, the Inuit in Alaska and Canada, the Tzotzil and Tzeltal in Chiapas, Mexico and Native Americans in the USA.

Terry Moon and Franklin Dmitryev
Chicago

In thinking about the revolt in Chiapas, I have questions about where the people's demand for the return of their land will lead. I don't think that it's enough to give the land back to the indigenous people, because technology has created a dependence on the way of production using insecticides and chemical fertilizers. This way of doing agriculture depletes the land of nutrients and makes the people economically dependent, and that is what leads to people leaving the land and migrating to the cities for better wages. They cannot afford to buy the fertilizers and insecticides and so do not have the economic means to keep producing, and that is how the government and the industries take advantage of that and take over the land. There is a need for self-sustainability, and if there is going to be a change, all of us have to think about the limits of resources and the need for changes in our lifestyles.

New reader
Los Angeles

Something is going on in Chiapas that is new, the relationship between peasant revolt as a spark that could set off a different kind of revolution in the advanced lands. Carlos Fuentes says Chiapas is the first post-communist revolt and that's why they are talking not of ideology but of "practical issues." But what is new has to do with the realm of thought. When I was reading Dunayevskaya's letter to Erich Fromm in the same March issue I kept thinking of Chiapas. She often saw "Spirit in Self-Estrangement" as a critique of Mao, but here she is not critiquing intellectuals who are aligned with state power but those who end up being rootless. The challenge from Chiapas is as sharp as Raya Dunayevskaya's demand that the intellectuals see the new.

Archivist
Chicago

The peasant rebellion in Chiapas was not a surprise. In this state, where the

peasant masses suffer the worst economic, political and social repression in the country, the self-organized indigenous movement has been rebelling against the classist and racist Mexican government for years. The silence from the local government and media has among its explanations the rulers' need to maintain an "image" of political and social stability which eventually allowed them to sign the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Latino
New York

I must describe myself as indigent because this state refuses to compensate prisoners for their labor. I could not even afford to mail this letter if they didn't allow me \$1.45 in free postage every week. But I realize there are others in this world who have even less than me.

It is very important to keep informed of the struggles others are fighting. As the Zapatista rebels in Chiapas fight, we need to remember that we are at war against capitalism and that the New World Order will not willingly give up the power that they possess and abuse. Until everyone understands that all forms of oppression are linked we will never achieve true justice for all.

Prisoner
Texas

The Mexican Revolution achieved certain things but remained on paper. The universality of the Chiapas uprising is so great because it comes from the people themselves and not from a slogan of "follow me" like Che Guevara.

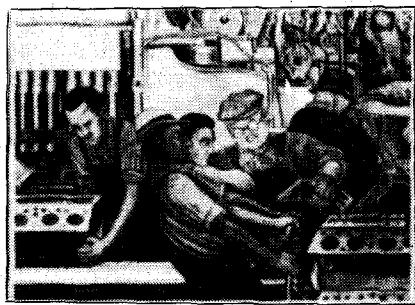
Revolutionary
New York

FROZEN CUBAN EMBARGO

The U.S. economic embargo of Cuba has caused great hardship for the Cuban people. The Cold War has ended. Cuba is not a threat to the U.S. The embargo has been rejected by the General Assembly of the UN, 23 Latin American heads of state and 13 members of the Caribbean community, but Washington seems frozen in the past. Many U.S. citizens are challenging the ban by delivering needed medicines and supplies to Cuba in defiance of U.S. policy. Recently Representative Charles Rangel (N.Y.) introduced a bill (H.R. 1943) in Congress to end the embargo. Please let your readers know they can help by urging their own representatives to pass it.

Academic supporter
Evanston, Ill.

LABOR STRUGGLES TODAY



At least three very bitter and protracted labor struggles in Michigan are continuing, despite nearly total silence from the media: 1) Although the UAW won the right to represent workers at the Dayton Hudson Company Westland store, the company has so far refused to bargain. The workers describe intimidation, and discrimination against women and longer-term employees; 2) Jacobson's CEO March Rosenfeld is slated for a humanitarian award on April 5 although 160 mostly older women warehouse workers, members of Teamster Local 194, have been locked out for over a year over their refusal to accept huge health care concessions; 3) Calling for a boycott are the beer truck drivers for Daniel L. Jacob & Co. (Budweiser and Anheuser-Busch) in Washtenaw County and South East Livingston County near Detroit. The drivers have been forced to take up to 25% pay cuts and suffer greatly from injuries caused by lifting heavy cases with no helper assigned to the trucks.

For more information on Jacobson's call Brenda Abbey (517) 784-4606 or Jobs With Justice (313) 461-1034. Con-

Readers' Views

tact Citizens for Justice at Hudson's, P.O. Box 27794, Detroit, MI 48227-9998.

Susan Van Gelder
Detroit

Most of the workers who were on the picket line in the Silver Palace strike don't speak English. Those that do translated our stories from N&L into Chinese for the others on the picket line.

Silver Palace supporter
New York

The government and management ministers met here for two days to try to solve unemployment problems that have developed over decades of government and management mis-management. Nobody expected anything out of that conference, and that's what came out of it—nothing.

Ford worker
Detroit

All they were doing at that G-7 conference was building economic coalitions to fight against the Asian countries that are threatening the European countries and the U.S.

Chrysler worker
Detroit

The G-7 Conference in Detroit was perfectly described in Hegel's critique of "Enlightenment" and the intellectual culture of a Spirit in self-estrangement. If the stupidity displayed at the G-7 didn't reflect the "inversion of reality and thought" I don't know what does. I even wrote a letter to President Clinton to let him know how I, as a worker, felt about his speech there.

Retired auto worker
Los Angeles



WOMEN'S LIBERATION

I would have titled Raya Dunayevskaya's letter from the Archives in the March issue "An Appeal for a Dialogue on Hegel." That is how she begins it, and she ends by saying the dive into Hegel is "not for any scholastic reasons, but because it is the essence for the understanding of today." Then she grounds her critique of Sartre's "Search for a Method" in the question of Hegel's "Spirit in Self-Estrangement—the Discipline of Culture" and the parallel she saw in Marx's concept of the "Fetishism of Commodities."

It seemed to me that Laurie Cashdan's essay on "Feminism and Marx's humanism reconsidered" caught some of that concept in her turn to Marx's *Capital* in order to discuss modern feminist theoreticians. In tracing out the relationship of the bourgeois family and the perverse nature of capitalist production, you can see the perverse relationships that flow from it.

Angela Terrano
New York

The essay on feminism and Marx's Humanism made some fine points on Marx but I have some questions on the discussion about poststructuralism which quoted Jennifer Ring that postmodernist theorists act as if "the power of the past can be undone by an act of literary will." More sophisticated feminist theorists like Gayatri Spivak or Judith Butler would laugh at such a conclusion. What drove many to Foucault was not literary critique but questions of the body and sexuality.

Scholar
New York

Communalism is attracting lots of women in India. There is a growing popularity of women's wings of Hindu parties, eclipsing the role of the autonomous feminist movement with an older and successful history of obliterating feminist movement issues. The success of the autonomous women's movement forced these parties to raise women's issues. This was started in the 1980s when women found "space" within their own community.

I think that fascist movements appeal

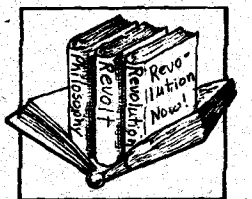
to some women as they always stress family values and traditional values. There is a strong link between women's issues and religious issues. In India, every religious group has different laws regarding marriage, divorce, inheritance. The feminist movement has been struggling for a common civil law and in this effort there is a lot of opposition from the fundamentalists in every religion.

Pilar
Bihar, India

Rarely have I been more outraged than when I learned that our government regards women's bodies as a source of food which can be harvested to help balance the damn budget! Congress set aside a whopping \$8 million over the past five years to promote breastfeeding among poor women in the U.S. Why? To reduce the cost of providing food under the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) program! Now the Government Accounting Office is studying "whether any changes in federal laws could encourage breastfeeding." Evidently even motherhood is no longer a sacred "cow."

Jan Kollwitz
Chicago

LITERATURE AND REVOLUTION



There's no way one can live the Black experience and not deal with the need to transform reality. The question of raising rhetoric to the level of revolution is the new duality we face, especially regarding Afrocentricity where rhetoric can replace the need for revolution and it becomes "revolutionary" just to listen to rap or see the film "Malcolm X." The question is whether that rhetorical character really becomes the point of departure for digging deeper into the theory needed to extract the revolutionary dimension of Black history and today's current needs.

Black writer
Chicago

Those in power know the power of writing. A lot of people don't read as much as they did before. Slaves were not allowed to read because writing has always been a force to change society. Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I A Woman?" speech first appeared in *The Liberator* so others could "hear" it.

New substitute teacher
Chicago

A lot of what poetry is now is just asking people to get up and express themselves. Is it art for art's sake or art for liberation? Many writers write for themselves, as opposed to Black writers like Richard Wright and Toni Morrison, who are writing for/to others.

White youth
Illinois

Publishing Richard Wright's 1941 essay for Black History Month showed that for N&L there is a relation between literature and revolution, where the "regular world" would insist they live on opposite sides of the street.

Young worker
Oak Park, Ill.

LANGUAGE AND SEXUALITY

I'm more and more adopting the word Queer to define who I am and what I'm doing, and the reason why is that it is a term that defies assimilation. Something that is "queer" cannot be normal, by definition. In that very defiance I like it, and also in the inclusiveness of it. That it's not your sexual practice per se, but rather how you are making sure that what you're doing is not again supporting that which is normal and status quo and mainstream. I love the word for those reasons.

Jennifer
California

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FARRAKHAN AND FUNDAMENTALISM

Lou Turner's recent article, "Farrakhan's 'frenzy of self-conceit'" in the "Black World" column highlighted the interrelation of moral code and political discipline in contemporary American Black fundamentalism, correctly pointing out that it was "as much a Christian as an Islamic creation." He called it an "alienated religiosity," but what Marx described as the "sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world," was religion itself. It is the self-consciousness of an individual adrift on the social sea, a person in search of genuine human moorings, a reversed world-consciousness for a reversed world. Nevertheless, Karl Marx and Lou Turner were right. Fundamentalism is alienated religiosity: supra-alienated consciousness, the self-awareness of individuals who, suspecting they may be lost, seek to define their condition as found. It is the world view of those who turn for the open ocean when land appears on the horizon. Fundamentalism must rely on political discipline because its reality is an illusion. The only way to sustain this illusion is by coercion.

Ted V. Chicago

Lou Turner brings out that many voices in Black academia are directly or indirectly supporting Nation of Islam's dogmatic theories. Cornel West has a caption on Farrakhan's latest book that says something like, if anyone is interested in the future of Black America he should reconsider Louis Farrakhan. It kind of fits in with the fact that most Black academics are pretty much reformist, advocating, like Farrakhan, a reform of current capitalism. They seem to feel that a "capitalism for everyone" is the only viable solution, and very rarely do you hear revolution as a consideration.

Revolutionary youth Los Angeles

What was great about Lou Turner's column was that it didn't only skewer Farrakhan—it skewered everyone! Khalid Muhammad, Elijah Muhammad,

Leonard Jeffries, Tony Martin, the Anti-Defamation League, the fascist Kach party of Meir Kahane all got what they deserved by being exposed so starkly by a deeply philosophic critique. I hope this column can be reprinted everywhere.

Women's liberationist Bremerton, Wash.

Lou Turner showed how Farrakhan uses Malcolm X to a certain point. The Nation of Islam sells his tapes, but in the long run they look at Malcolm X as a Judas, who sold out. Turner is right that they're trying to destroy the ghost of Malcolm X. Malcolm's greatness was his ability to change, his self-critique and his development from that. For him the ideology of the human element determined reality and the future. In Mecca he saw all colors of people, and so it was no longer color as the determinant. It was your belief in what you represented. I think he would have gone even further, maybe towards a concept of humanism.

Gene Ford Los Angeles

There is a road to freedom but it is a vast struggle. One thing that is done is to pit the Black middle class against those fighting for freedom and call freedom fighters illegitimate. Behind that is the Man who has pulled the strings all along, who says this is not the time for freedom. We have never got to freedom, so the struggle is ongoing.

Mark Jones Chicago

STOP THE POLL TAX

The Highland Regional Council has been waging a campaign of economic terrorism to try and collect their poll tax money, delivering warrants to people to impound their household goods. The next struggle looming here is a consumer strike against the imposition of a tax on fuel. We will pay minus the tax.

Bill Johnston Scotland

RUSSIA AND THE PLAN

The point in the essay "Where is Russia going?" about how many of the "independent leftists" in Russia still harbor a hidden nostalgia for the Plan and nationalized property is very important. It reminds me of the analysis of the independent Russian socialist Boris Kagarlitsky: Yeltsin's policies are resulting in the deindustrialization of Russia, and therefore it is now the moment for socialists to advocate worker collaboration with their bosses, the industrial managers! He includes the various reformed Communist Parties (i.e., adherents of the former totalitarian state-capitalist rulers) under the same "Left" rubric as the youth organizing as anarchists and anarcho-communists.

M.L. Los Angeles

NEW INTEREST IN MARXISM



I am beginning to appreciate an organization such as News and Letters Committees, representing Marxist-Humanism. Even though I still have questions in my mind regarding issues of leadership and centralization/ decentralization...only a revolutionary education, a struggle for freedom, an activist engagement in a dialectic of theory/practice, is a true human development. I look forward to the classes on Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind. My initial reading is beginning to demystify Raya Dunayevskaya's work for me.

New member Los Angeles

There seems to be a renewed interest in Marxism. It's kind of like the '60s (not that I was alive then) but there seems to be more people interested in ideas than I found three or four years ago. I talk to people about Marxist-Humanism and about Raya's writings. I

know I don't understand a lot of what she wrote but just from talking to me, people want to hear more. It helps me focus on what I need to think through more.

High school student California

I am an artist/poet enslaved by the notion that I must work dull survival jobs in this "land of the free." I subscribed to N&L hoping to gain insight into my independent struggle towards a personal anarchy. I have found the paper informative, honest and "humanistic" but I don't have the patience to deal with the power brokers of this greedy world of ours. Only when "push comes to shove" will you see me at the front lines, ready to kick some capitalist butt.

New subscriber Austin, Texas

BOSNIA AND THE UN

What is your position now that the imperialist UN has moved into Bosnia-Herzegovina? I do not support UN intervention anywhere in the world. In this period U.S. and world imperialism use the UN as a front for political and military control of oppressed peoples. In the U.S., the National Guard and the Marines serve a similar military purpose.

D.A. North Carolina

A CORRECTION

In the lead on the Chiapas uprising in the March issue of News & Letters, footnote 2 refers to The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism by Raya Dunayevskaya. Dunayevskaya developed the theory of state-capitalism but never wrote a work with that title. The quote is from her 1942 study, "Labor and Society," included in the above-mentioned collection (on p. #23, not p. #21 as cited in the article). For the benefit of all new and old N&L readers who may want to learn more about Dunayevskaya's writings, I think it's important to be precise.

Librarian Michigan

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS

The following is a select list of publications available from News & Letters. A full list of our publications is available in our "Marxist-Humanist Literature Catalogue," available from N&L for 50¢.

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by Raya Dunayevskaya

- Marxism and Freedom ...from 1776 until today
1989 edition. New introduction by author
\$17.50 per copy
- Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao
1989 edition. New introduction by author
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- Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution
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- Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future
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- The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: selected writings.
\$8.50 per copy
- The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya.
"Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987," and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes."
\$3.00 paperback, \$10.00 hardcover

- Indignant Heart:
A Black Worker's Journal
1989 edition includes Afterword by Raya Dunayevskaya, "Charles Denby 1907-83" by Charles Denby
\$14.95 per copy

—PAMPHLETS—

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Statement of the National Editorial Board. Includes "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa," by Raya Dunayevskaya, and "Black Caucuses in the Unions" by Charles Denby
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Contains introduction, "Today's Epigones Who Try to Truncate Marx's Capital," and Chapters Five through Eight of Marxism and Freedom by Raya Dunayevskaya
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- The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development
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Black/Red View

by John Alan

Almost 30 years after Berkeley, Cal., integrated its public schools without any hassles over "forced" busing, ethnic studies is a controversial issue at Berkeley High School. Many students think that the required course in ethnic studies has failed to bridge the cultural gap between the students. Administrators and teachers at Berkeley High contend that "teachers are not seeking to bring the students together physically, just mentally" in order to construct a foundation to make them more sensitive to the cultures of others.

Both views reveal the narrow limits that the public school system has when it attempts to deal with the unresolved problems of class and race, wealth and poverty, disguised under the rubric of diversity and multiculturalism. For example, it has been reported, that in a recent ethnic studies class a Black student asked a challenging question about an assigned text entitled "The Whites and non-Whites." The student wanted to know: "Why do white people always get their own category and everyone else has to be labeled non-white?"

Environmental debates

(continued from page 5)

Benton has spirited away Marx's focus on the contradiction between abstract and concrete labor. The contradiction develops in many concrete ways as capitalism develops. What is at first only the formal subordination of the worker to the capitalist becomes the real subordination of the worker to capital, as the labor process is redesigned so as to make the machine the prime mover and reduce the human worker to its appendage. What appears as an irrational, destructive domination of nature by humanity is actually the reflection of the subordination of both nature and humanity to capital.

Marx's analysis of the dialectic of capitalism shows the perversion of the relationship of subject and object, where the object is value, dead labor, especially in the form of the machine, which acts as the subject and dominates the living laborer, who becomes an object, an appendage to the machine.

BEYOND NATURAL & THEORETICAL LIMITS

Inherent in Marx's treatment of the dual character of labor is that value dominates, but can never totally submerge, the human being. The revolt of the workers is the subjects' reclaiming their own subjectivity from the machine and positing their subjectivity as objective, in the form of revolutionary activity. While the revolt traced in Capital is that of labor at the point of production, Marx's argument provides ground for comprehending today's multiple forces of revolution and mass opposition to environmental destruction as also challenging capitalism's perverse relationship of object over subject.

By contrast, Benton's counterposition of human transformative powers to natural limits leaves him no way to explain environmental movements except as a reaction to production's "unintended consequences." His necessary conclusion is the need to limit those transformative powers by restraints on certain types of technology. There is no place in his theory for recognition of how both design and use of technology are shaped by the perverse object-subject relationship.

Benton is correct in seeing "transformative, productive powers of associated human beings" as central to Marx. But why pose them as the cause, rather than the solution, of social ecological problems? Is human power necessarily equivalent to "domination of nature"?

The secret of Benton's concept of human powers—a concept shared by many activists and theorists—is the recognition of those powers only in an alienated shape, that is, as powers embodied in capital, as a "hostile force." The aspects of human power that then stand out are its technological forms and the sheer scale of social production. Such a theoretical concept skips over the contradiction within human power itself: human beings themselves struggling against their domination by their own products.

In the Marxist-Humanist analysis of Capital, the productive powers Dunayevskaya emphasizes are not just machinery but also the human power of cooperative labor. That is not only a power of production but a power of revolt—not only transforming objects but transforming the human being, and society. The essence of the ideological pollution of our time is the overwhelming consciousness of defeat, the loss of confidence in that human power of transformation of society.

This retreat from revolution is developed in theory as the impossibility of any transformation that results in true liberation. Such a theory sees subjectivity as a monstrosity when it exercises "human transformative powers" in order to posit itself as objective. Therefore, the domination of object over subject is posited as natural and eternal, rather than a social form of a specific historical stage, capitalism. What Benton has achieved is the articulation of that theoretic principle. That makes his theory represent far more than just one individual's misinterpretation of Marx.

There is some truth in a theory that conceives human power as negative. But the solution to environmental destruction cannot be found by imposing external limitations. It must rather be sought in the use of human power itself to effect transcendence of its alienation from human subjectivity and thus from nature. That is the direction the movements from below are looking for. It is also the thrust of Marx's body of ideas. Working it out concretely, in theory and in practice, as direction for today's movements is a task for our age.

Multiculturalism excuses status quo

The obvious intent of the student was to challenge the fact that his cultural development was being determined and judged externally by a so-called "white concept" of culture. Often this negative relationship is expressed negatively toward more academic Black students by other Black students who accuse them of wanting to be "white." This negative attitude is not totally irrational because it expresses the existence of Black opposition to being mere objects in a race-determined social relationship, even if it is called multiculturalism.

It is very easy to single out the race dimension of American culture. Alexis de Tocqueville, the French aristocrat, in the early 19th century thought that it would lead to the destruction of American civilization. Since then many historians and sociologists have tried in vain to understand why race—and racism—is such a powerful dimension in American culture.

Andrew Hacker, the eminent sociologist, simply says that America is inherently a "white country in character, in structure, in culture," something often repeated by reactionary whites in defense of the racial status quo at the time of the Civil Rights Movement.

Saying that the culture of America is "white" reveals little; it only gives the appearance of a culture permeated with the ideology of racism. But what is the ground of this culture, its true essentiality? If sociologists would dare to leave their computers and their so-called objective statistics, they would discover that neither culture nor racism are autonomous social phenomena, but are "spiritual" manifestations of America's commodity producing society and the way it organizes and disciplines labor to perform that kind of production.

The manic pursuit of commodity production began when the first Africans were brought to this country as slave laborers to produce cotton and tobacco for the world market. Later the African was followed by great waves of European workers to toil in the factories and the mines. In this gigantic historical process, Black and white humanity, along with their labor and culture, was stripped away and transformed into another commodity—labor power.

While some may see that American society is divided today, the process of the separation of races remains a missing ingredient. For example, the postmodernist Jerry Herron, in his recent book *After Culture: Detroit and the Humiliation of History*, relates Detroit's urban culture to Henry Ford's invention of the assembly line in Highland Park in 1911.

Herron makes the preposterous claim that Ford's assembly line "democratized work on a vast scale...by reducing it to the level of duplicatable idiocy...where historical differences—race, religion, language, national origin—were transformed by work into modern individuality." He says nothing about the reality of the assembly line, the harsh discipline it imposes upon workers and the destruction of their individuality in the process of performing "duplicatable idiocy." He is also silent about the working-class struggles in Detroit and the crisis in the automobile industry.

By avoiding the realities of Ford's rationalization of commodity production, Herron arrives at two conclu-

sions for the "unmaking" of white, middle-class culture in Detroit: first, Black violence of the 1960s drove the white middle class to the suburbs; and second, this represented the failure to deal with urban life.

Herron's conclusions place him among the multiculturalists and the white cultural chauvinists since they all create the same dualism. All make a universal out of culture, separating it from the realities of life while at the same time thinking that culture is something that can be imposed upon reality. Yes, there is a crisis in American culture, but it can only be resolved by the creation of a new society that has as its object the real production of human life.

Media poverty pimps

Chicago, Ill.—Picture this scenario: 28 people living crammed together in one filth-strewn apartment. Three Black women: all sisters, all with drug habits, and all on welfare, put on display before television cameras—the perfect prey for opportunist politicians and the vultures of the media.

This scene describes the recent discovery on Chicago's west side of a Black family forced to live in overcrowded conditions. The media descended quickly from its perch to exploit the situation. We heard about the drug abuse, implied child abuse, and the typical Black woman "welfare queen." The politicians, from Mayor Daley to President Clinton, were quick to use these Black families' deplorable conditions to further bolster their own draconian cutbacks in welfare. But there is another side, contrary to the impression left by the media that the community had completely abandoned these children.

Members of Keystone Baptist Church, across the street from the apartment, had been giving the children food and clothing through several programs. Neighbors had spoken to the women about their children, but were turned away. A woman from the church attempted to talk with the mothers, but was stopped at the front door. Some of the children were in the church's summer camp and its afterschool tutoring program. The Department of Children and Family Services had been called on several occasions to no avail.

When a television news crew came to interview members of the church, one woman defended the mothers. She explained that the mothers were doing the best they could with what they had and she justified taking in the other sisters' families on the grounds that the children would have been homeless otherwise. This did not fit the script. The reporter began walking off. The camera person shut off the camera, pointing it at the floor instead.

Not once did the media connect the social conditions of these Black women with the lack of affordable housing, drug treatment facilities with months long waiting lists, or the loss of over 1,000 manufacturing jobs in Chicago over the past decade. All we were left with was a distorted image of drug addicted welfare queens fabricated by an irresponsible media and law-and-order politicians. The real picture of what contributed to these deplorable living conditions remains to be shown.

—R.W.

Black World

(continued from page 1)

Somali famine victims] are no longer on the screens." Speaking as much for the UN as for U.S. national interests, Moose announced, in a recent interview that "we have gone forward with...a peacekeeping force in Rwanda." Intervention into the "killing fields" of neighboring Burundi is already under active UN-U.S. consideration.

Though Moose is merely articulating the current UN-U.S. multilateralism that passes as Clinton's foreign policy, it is not inconsistent with the prevailing neoliberal imperialist attitudes of Black intellectuals and political leaders who, like Jesse Jackson, Ron Dellums and TransAfrica's Randall Robinson, supported the Bush-Clinton policy. In Somalia, UNOSOM was seen as a war to re-colonize an African country, while these African-American leaders helped cast it as imperialism with a human face. The reality that they have yet to face, and which this imperialist misadventure now leaves behind, is a society with more crises than existed before the Marines landed.

One of the most tragic but unreported outcomes of UNOSOM is the plight of some 300,000 Somali refugees, mostly women and children, stranded in the desolate wastes of northeastern Kenya. According to the joint report issued by Africa Watch and the Women's Rights Project, "Seeking Refuge, Finding Terror," the rape of Somali women has assumed massive proportions at the hands of armed Somali and Kenyan bandits and soldiers. The tragic irony is that many of the women raped in the refugee camps fled there because they were victims of rape in Somalia.

Writing for *Africa Report* (Nov.-Dec., 1993), Binaifer Nowrojee explains:

"For Somali women, the physical injuries caused by being violently raped are, in some cases, compounded by the practice of female genital mutilation. Somali women subjected to genital mutilation have generally undergone infibulation. This practice involves the removal of the clitoris and the inner lips, followed by incisions in the outer lips to create raw surfaces which are then stitched together. Only a small opening, sometimes the size of a match stick, remains for the flow of urine and menstrual

What has Somalia meant?

blood. Sexual intercourse for women who have undergone this operation is painful unless the opening is gradually expanded over a period of time or they are recut to widen the opening. Rape is excruciatingly painful for the refugee women who have undergone this procedure. In some cases, the bandits preparing to rape a refugee woman have slit open her vagina with a knife before raping her."

In the end, the U.S.-UN intervention has left Somalia bleeding, and what beginnings made towards resolving Somalia's crisis by the Somalis themselves have come about in spite of, not as a result of, Operation Restore Hope's "nation building."

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Editorial

U.S.-China human rights farce

Secretary of State Warren Christopher accepted his share of humiliation on his mid-March mission to Beijing. His message, couched as a warning to the perpetrators of the Tiananmen Square Massacre of June 4, 1989, was that China would lose its Most Favored Nation (MFN) trading status without concrete movement on political dissidents and human rights. In substance he was there to beg for just enough signs of action to let President Clinton renew MFN.

But Christopher's real humiliation came back in Washington when the administration cut the legs out from under him. Led by Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen, voices around Clinton criticized the law and the policy Christopher had just represented; the linkage of trade and human rights.

That policy had come about because of popular pressure for sanctions against China's rulers after the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, where both the opposition and the repression stood so far out in the world spotlight that overnight there was sentiment for isolating China not unlike that for isolating apartheid South Africa. Clinton, on the campaign trail in 1992, mined that sentiment by attacking Bush for certifying China's compliance with human rights requirements each year and so renewing MFN.

Because of pressure from business, Clinton renewed China's MFN last May, adding only the requirement that China show "significant, overall progress toward improving its human rights record," then meet with Deng Xiaoping's chosen Communist Party chairman Jiang Zemin in November. Clinton had done the same

Hegel's Phenomenology

(continued from page 4)

the masses in motion, the self-determination of the Idea, to hear itself speak, and how it develops; we have the single dialectical process of both of them. And let us see where we actually get when we come to today'sness, and try to recapture not only Marx, but also Hegel, and within Hegel capture what was just an element, just implicit, not quite clear—because this Absolute Idea as new beginning means we have seen something in Hegel that no others have seen, because they didn't live in our age, and each age brings out something new in what the people from below have done, in what has happened in the world historic events.

THE MOVEMENT OF THE PHENOMENOLOGY

The Phenomenology of Mind has different stages of consciousness: Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason. Then you go into Spirit, which is supposedly the new society, but you find out that Spirit too is in Self-Estrangement, and culture really transforms into opposite the relationship of reality to thought. When you therefore re-arise into Absolute Knowledge, there is something that is really abstract—and Hegel thought so too, but he wanted to come to a certain conclusion.

Now, even though everyone, Marxists and non-Marxists, and people who don't believe in anything Hegel wrote, recognize that the Phenomenology is Hegel's greatest work, nevertheless, according to a mechanical view of things, the work is very chaotic. Hegel originally thought he was only writing on Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason; that's all he had outlined—he had planned this as a little introduction to what he would write in *Science of Logic*, where he would write in actual scientific, i.e., philosophic categories. But what happened is that the Phenomenology stretched for 800 pages! The point, however, is that the Phenomenology reflects both the movement in life—in this case, the French Revolution—and Hegel's disgust with his colleagues, the philosophers, who were using all of the same old categories.

Hegel was saying: For heaven's sake, look how the world has changed! We Germans just keep talking, but the French have really done everything: they've abolished the monarchy, they've abolished the republic—or at least partway—they've gone through things and done it, and what have we done except talk? At this point—loving the French and hating the Germans—Hegel was even welcoming Napoleon, thinking, well, at least he'll get rid of feudalism in Germany...

There is nothing that so excites Existentialists as Phenomenology of Mind; they have built their Existentialism on it—or at least so they think. And they've tried to apply it. But it is impossible, it is wrong—in addition to being impossible—to try to apply Hegel. You have to see that if it is true what he describes, that there is a dual rhythm of revolution and counter-revolution, that there is a dual rhythm of thought and activity, if it emerges from below—you have to work out the dialectic for your age, you can't "apply" it.

But everyone has tried to apply it...Take Merleau-Ponty. He said that the greatest work since the Phenomenology of Mind is Capital. But Capital is not the application, so to speak, of the Phenomenology. Sartre says that the fetishism of commodities, in Chapter 1 of Capital, is the greatest thing, but it just begins our trouble. Each one—even Engels—tried to apply the relationship of Hegel to Marx, instead of seeing how each arose in its time, on the basis of the dialectic, and what you have to do is re-create the dialectic for your age...

The point however is, when we look at Chapter 1 [of Capital], Marx had to create an entirely new continent of thought to develop all of those categories, plus other material that is very originally Marx and only Marx. The idea of trying to "apply" means that supposedly you are so unhappy with just abstract categories that you want to go immediately to the concrete; in fact, however, you haven't yet grasped the Hegelian dialectic...

about-face on Haiti, criticizing Bush for returning Haitian refugees into the bloody hands of the military after President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's overthrow, then continuing and defending the same action in face of repeated slaughter.

Jiang and other rulers had seen enough of these flip-flops to dare to call Clinton's bluff. They stepped up arrests in Beijing even during Christopher's visit and put at risk the \$40 billion in U.S.-China trade during an export-driven economic expansion because they figured there was no risk—the U.S. would blink first.

The very size of the trade deficit—\$31 billion exported to the U.S. versus \$9 billion to China—might indicate that U.S. capitalists want Chinese labor more than China needs investment. Many of the 550 U.S. companies located in China were looking for a billion customers, but the bulk of the \$3 billion U.S. companies have invested is in production destined for the U.S., and that has helped to sustain two years of a torrid 13% growth.

In some trades now, production from China dominates in the U.S.: over half the shoes sold here are made in China. Companies have rushed to be a part of the restructuring of China's state-capitalist economy with a wage level so low that one economist said firms could count wages as zero on a balance sheet compared to the other costs of production.

Only now has the government set a legal limit to the working day in private enterprises: an eight-hour day, yet allowing up to 48 hours of overtime a month! There is no minimum wage yet for workers in private enterprises. The frequent participation by local and party officials in these ventures means even sparser health and safety enforcement than in the U.S.

If China's rulers are risking such a high volume of exports to the U.S. by not releasing all dissidents, it is because they fear the masses and the voices of revolt. Political prisoners as different as Wei Jingsheng and Han Dongfang, founder of the Beijing Autonomous Workers Federation, have not remained silent when released.

One official report pressed for sterner measures against labor in light of 250,000 strikes and work stoppages since 1989. Underlying part of the unrest by workers in the largest cities is inflation topping 20% not counting housing, which when privatized has skyrocketed. In the countryside, peasants in more than 20 provinces have staged revolts against confiscatory taxes, not to mention the revolts inside the armed camps that are in Tibet and the Muslim areas of the West.

It is not just the beacon of China's economic expansion that guides U.S. foreign policy. Clinton, like all presidents since Nixon, has counted on arrangements with China for stability in Asia. Hoping to play the China card now in restraining North Korea and whatever nuclear threat it poses, Clinton does not sound ready to let "little" things like increasing numbers of women being kidnapped and sold in South China stand in the way of that relationship.

When Secretary Bentsen, just days after Christopher's mission, chipped away at the linkage of trade and human rights by talking of the need to "balance our interests" in Asia, China's rulers have every reason to expect that by June, no concrete conditions will interfere with MFN and the explosive expansion of U.S.-China trade.



Han Dongfang, founder of the Beijing Autonomous Workers Federation.

G-7 labor ministers can't touch unemployment

"Modern Industry...compels society, under penalty of death, to replace the detail-worker of today...reduced to the mere fragment of a man, by the fully developed individual, fit for a variety of labors, ready to face any change of production..."
Karl Marx, Capital

Detroit, Mich.—The G-7 "jobs conference" held in Detroit on March 14-15, which included the U.S., Canada, England, France, Germany, Italy and Japan, produced little besides an exchange of ideas on the chronic global unemployment crisis. When first proposed by President Clinton at the G-7 (the Group of Seven leading industrial nations) meeting in Tokyo last year, the idea received a cool response. But persistent and growing unemployment changed the attitudes of member governments facing both elections and rising rebellious actions of not only the unemployed, but also of the employed who see their own jobs and livelihood endangered.

This was the first G-7 meeting that included labor ministers from each country, which attests to the magnitude of the problem. In the U.S., with unemployment over 6.5%, more than 8.5 million are jobless, while 6 million are underemployed—without counting the millions who have given up on even trying to find a job. In Europe, unemployment averages some 12%, with over 19 million unemployed. Spain tops the list at 23% unemployed.

President Clinton said he chose Detroit for the conference because it reflected an economically resurgent auto industry. A profitable auto industry, however, does not mean a jobs increase. In fact, the auto industry in Detroit, which today has only three auto assembly plants, ranks third in employment behind both health care and public employees. Detroit meanwhile suffers an unemployment rate of over 11%. A Ford worker in Detroit said of the conference: "That was a management-government meeting. They can't solve the problem—they are the problem. The ones who can solve it are the workers, only we weren't invited."

One conference agreement centered on the need to improve education so youth would be prepared for technologically changing production demands of industry, with Japan and Germany singled out as models where young people are regimented early in school and taught to adapt themselves to capitalism's changing demands. In the U.S., for example, a few years ago it took the Big Three (GM, Chrysler, Ford) 30 days to train a worker. Now it takes from six months to a year. At a Chrysler plant in Windsor, Ontario (across the river from Detroit), a startling two-thirds of the workers recently hired on a new midnight shift were college graduates.

Education is certainly critical, but management's solution is exposed by the statement of Chrysler Vice President Thomas Stalcamp at a side conference to the G-7 meeting by labor and management officials: "It might be nice to see a [school] lab with a mini-robot in it rather than a classroom with a blackboard." Thus, "failure" of education in the U.S. is to be remedied by teaching all students to meet the needs of capitalist production. Nor is this limited to the "school years." Now a lifelong learning process—with at least seven job changes foreseen during a lifetime—will serve the U.S.'s alienating, exploitative industry.

On the other hand, even capitalist mouthpieces recognize the revolt of the workers. Dominique Moisi, deputy director of the French Institute of International Relations observed: "In France there are people already saying we are preparing ourselves for a nice little replay of the revolutionary events of May '68—only this time around, it won't be young people bored with growth and the affluent society who take to the barricades, but young people desperate to find a place in a system that rejects them."

—Andy Phillips

Britain's secret arms diplomacy exposed

Oxford, England—Out of a trio of political scandals a picture is emerging of government ministries working hand-in-glove with arms corporations and construction firms to procure overseas contracts. While Margaret Thatcher and her successor John Major pose as champions of democracy, human rights and a "free market," their words are contradicted by their actions, peddling weapons of war to some of the most violent and oppressive regimes on earth.

Since 1978, British Aerospace has supplied Indonesia with Hawk warplanes. The first contract was signed less than three years after the Indonesian army invaded East Timor, beginning an ongoing genocidal conquest. The Labour government's foreign secretary at the time was David Owen, now the UN peace envoy in Bosnia. Sales continued under Thatcher, who made a state visit to Indonesia, and under Major. The Hawks were used to attack Timorese mountain villages with incendiary bombs and machine guns. Other military equipment sold by Britain to the Suharto regime includes navy frigates, helicopters, armoured vehicles and Land Rovers.

After the Iran-Iraq war, the Ministry of Defense and the department of trade secretly encouraged British companies to export arms-related products to Iraq, in disregard of legal restrictions and the government's own policy. At the time Saddam Hussein was attacking the Kurdish people with poison gas. These secret deals helped Hussein to rebuild the Iraqi war machine, which he later used to invade Kuwait. After the Gulf War, the directors of Matrix Churchill, a company which had supplied machine tools for use in arms factories, were prose-

cuted for breaking export regulations. The directors' defense, which was documented, was that the government had known and approved of their actions.

In 1988 Malaysia agreed to spend one billion pounds (\$1.48 billion) on Hawk aircraft and navy frigates from Britain. At the same time, Britain made a low-interest loan of 234 million pounds (\$346 million) for the Pergau hydroelectric dam project. This loan was made under the Aid for Trade program, which meant that Malaysia had to contract with British firms to construct the dam. What was special in this case was that there was (briefly) a formal, written linkage between the arms deal and the aid package. The government is claiming that this was simply a mistake, which was afterwards put right. However, an analysis by the World Development Movement has shown that the British aid allocations have increased for countries which purchase British weapons. Since 1980, aid to Indonesia has tripled, while for Malaysia and Oman it has doubled.

Some Tory politicians have asserted that these arms exports have preserved thousands of jobs in Britain, undoubtedly true as things stand. This illustrates the monstrous perversity of capitalism, which steals workers' time, skill and energy to fill the Third World with death-dealing weapons for the sake of profit, capital accumulation and global power politics. Arms trade or unemployment—this is a false dilemma. The only alternative is for working people to win control of the economy and to run it on the principle of developing the quality of life everywhere.

—Richard Bunting

Clinton's criminal code imprisons America's future

(continued from page 1)

ing that concern for the purpose of pushing his authoritarian crime policy is what brought Bill Clinton, in his role as "moral leader," to Memphis Nov. 13, where he preached about Black-on-Black violence. Topping the President's list of culprits responsible for violence and drugs was "the breakdown of the family." "The values, the spirit, the soul, and the truth of human nature"—these, not the government, would deliver African Americans from violence.

Although the Congressional Black caucus promises support only for an omnibus crime bill that includes economic aid to communities, they have surrendered to Clinton's degrading thesis nevertheless. Rep. Charles B. Rangel's pitiful response to Memphis was: "We have not spoken out about the cancers we have in our own bodies...And all of them weren't planted there by the majority." Jesse Jackson, even before convening his own crime summit, refused to let Clinton steal the crime show. Adding his own reproach of Black families, he stoically declared, "We got the power right now to stop killing each other, to stop abandoning our babies and give them the dignity of our names."

Clinton's timing is not accidental. As long as the debilitating effects of drugs and violence were contained within the ghettos of the U.S., the ruling class was content to play the usual game of benign neglect. Then the L.A. rebellion came along to reveal that the explosive nature of festering social conditions could engulf the whole urban landscape, even reaching into suburbia.

A SPECTER HAUNTS U.S. RULERS

A South Central Los Angeles resident spelled out what the U.S. bourgeoisie so mortally fears: "I would say that the spirit of rebellion was not a planned-out event, but took on a natural organization which captures a mood of the times." Indeed, following the unity meetings which brought together hundreds of gang members, unimaginable prior to the L.A. uprising, labor historian Mike Davis reported that "being a gangbanger is no longer the thing to be. Now the thing to be is, in some sense, a freedom fighter."

It is U.S. capitalism's ongoing response to this "mood of the times" that signals the broader agenda inherent in its anti-crime machinations. The new, Black, "reformer" police chief of Los Angeles, Willie Williams, is supervising a severe repression that is to be the model for cities across the land. Especially chilling is Operation Hammer which in its post-rebellion, escalated phase aims to build a rap sheet on every young Black, Chicano and Latino within its jurisdiction. People are detained solely in order to generate new data. Inclusion on this so-called gang list can count as a felony charge against any one of the hundreds of thousands of people listed.

Community organizations like Mothers ROC (Reclaiming Our Children) and the L.A.4+ Defense Committee continue to press the even more dire cases of one youth after another, framed by the police and put away by racist courts. A Mothers ROC member explains, "One Black male is considered just as guilty as any other Black male, so little time is wasted on the facts and the sentence begins at the time of arrest." Another remarked angrily, "Once the smell of gangs and drugs enters a case, nobody goes free."

RAGE AND INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE

The repressive matrix of police, laws and courts is quite a different sort of response to the Los Angeles uprising than previous urban upheavals. The Kerner Commission report which followed the 1960s Black revolts and the commission report following a series of Miami rebellions in the 1980s all cited underlying police brutality and held out hope for economic and social redress to ghetto residents. No such commission report followed Los Angeles because it's clear that no such promises can be met. Instead, the response was George Bush's and now Bill Clinton's federally directed prison buildup and the police apparatus to go along with it.

What happens to youth caught in this deteriorating order has become the subject of intense debate by social scientists, some of whom have gone so far as to theorize that Black youth are genetically prone to violence. Oth-



Watts community mural: "Crossfire (The First Word on Peace)"

ers like youth advocate Michael Green observe sympathetically that "youth respond to the chronic stressors of poverty and violence with rage, distrust, and hopelessness. More than half of all homicides occur in the context of interpersonal conflict, that is, rage...Young people growing up in poverty and around violence are very angry about what feels like everyone's inattention to their plight...Teenagers growing up in poverty and around violence frequently question whether they will survive into adulthood."

That almost one-fifth of all violent crime is committed by youths is a fact that officials have stretched into an image of youth as lawless and culpable. "They label us as being violent and punish us while we are still too young, even before we do something," bitterly complains a 14-year-old in San Francisco. An ignored fact is that teenagers are the single most victimized segment of society. In New York City, murder is the leading cause of death of 15- to 19-year-olds, men and women. Throughout the U.S. in the late 1980s, 12- to 19-year-old people were victims of 1.9 million rapes, robberies, and assaults.

Kids in inner cities experience racial segregation, crumbling buildings, bookless libraries, insidious "tracking" methods that kill enthusiasm for learning—the message behind these conditions is that society cares nothing for their development.

Furthermore, young people face the organized power of the police, laws and courts arrayed against them. The death penalty is no longer out of bounds for teenagers. In fact, the authoritarian pattern of this criminal justice system has less to do with the way an individual acts than it does with a logic of repression which is clearest in its racial form, a fact apparent to any young person. Sixty percent of youths in public custody facilities are either Black or Chicano/Latino. And police harassment and brutality happens mostly to young people, and particularly to young minority group men.

Part of the pattern is also what happens to figures of wealth and influence who—like Oliver North who now runs for the U.S. Senate and Michael Milken who lectures at UCLA—openly break the law and are rewarded with the lightest of punishments.

from their kind.

LOOSENING THE BINDS

While it is hardly original to say that crime is a product of capitalism, Karl Marx's explanation of what happened when the poorest sections of feudal society were "freed" from the land remains compelling:

The proletariat created by the breaking-up of [feudalism] and by the forcible expropriation of the people from the soil, this free and rightless proletariat...were turned in massive quantities into beggars, robbers and vagabonds, part from inclination, in most cases under the force of circumstances...Legislation treated them as "voluntary" criminals, and assumed that it was entirely within their powers to go on

working under the old conditions which in fact no longer existed. Capital, Vintage Press, p. 897)

In today's globalized economy of Third World wages and conditions, large and growing groups in America's depressed inner cities find themselves "freed" from industry and, for young people, work itself. Once again, being poor itself is a crime.

Added to this is the current appeal of the former Black Panther Party's glorification of a so-called lumpen proletarian life style among today's youth. While that piece of left mythology is perceived as "revolutionary" by some, others fear that people have already "thrown away this generation." As a young lesbian Chicana put it, "It all began with the cutbacks in education, and now rather than being educated, we are being put away for life. Many youths aren't ever given any opportunities to create something with their lives." But unlike social scientists, she envisions how to overcome: "As youth we need to organize to reclaim our generation."

A participant in the Los Angeles uprising likewise shows where the overcoming can lead when rage runs to reason:

I've been thinking for a long time that I'm crazy. There was one day, about a year ago, that I felt like going out and killing somebody. The denial in this country about what's really going on is so deep. For black men, we thought we were going crazy. But this event (the L.A. rebellion) convinced me I was not nuts...The envelope was turned inside out for us, and we could see the seams. The riots straightened everything out...They look at us like we're a bunch of killers—that we're waiting for the chance to kill people. We're a bunch of people waiting for a chance to live.

A slew of tougher prison sentences are likely to be adopted, taking the heat off the rulers who pander to a white, racist electorate—until it becomes apparent that they haven't worked and the next upsurge of anger and seizing a chance to live comes along.

Conference debates Marx's value theory

Boston, Mass.—In an intensive mini-conference on value/price theory, held here between March 18-20, the philosophical and technical dimensions of Marxian value theory were jammed together, largely by happenstance. The resulting dialogue on the meaning and relevance of Marx's value categories attained a rare depth.

Conducted within the Eastern Economic Association conference, the mini-conference brought together 17 invited panelists from the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Great Britain, Spain, and Japan, including individuals associated with such publications as *Capital & Class*, *International Journal of Political Economy*, *London Notes*, *News & Letters*, *Rethinking Marxism*, *Review of Radical Political Economics*, and *Science and Society*. A dozen or so other participants, including non-academics, joined in the discussions.

The participants' sharp theoretical and political differences, evident from the beginning of the conference, were greatly clarified through three days of intensive, continuous dialogue. The following issues surfaced: whether value production, and abstract labor, are transhistorical or specifically capitalistic phenomena; whether Marx's value categories are investigative tools or expressions of real relations; whether, and why, we "need" value theory; the primacy of market forms vs. production relations; and the class nature of the ex-USSR.

The mini-conference's central theme was the exploration of "new approaches" that defend the internal consistency of Marx's value theory. Academic economists have long claimed that "logical errors" negate Marx's arguments that market phenomena do not alter the total value and surplus-value generated in production, and that mechanization and automation produce a tendency for the profit rate to fall.

It is these "errors," above all, that radical critics have pointed to as justification for "completing" or "correcting" Marx's critique of political economy, and that bourgeois critics use to dismiss and/or suppress it. By refusing to flee to abstractions that evade the quantitative questions, the "new approaches" hope to open space for

the renewal of Marx's critique of political economy as against today's fragmented and apologetic "Marxist economics."

Many conference participants were unenthusiastic about the project of defending Capital in its own terms. Many believe Marxist economics can best progress by debating mainstream economics, answering empirical questions, or taking an eclectic approach to theory. Also, many participants remained skeptical that the "new approaches" had indeed refuted the claims of Capital's logical inconsistency. Yet many likewise acknowledged that they needed to study the issues anew.

Several participants complained that examination of the logical consistency issue had been impeded by the mini-conference's wide-ranging discussion of value theory. Others emphasized, however, that the key issue concerns interpretation. Arguing that the "new approaches" rest on value categories conceived as expressions of alienated labor, rather than of transhistorical physiological or technological phenomena (as in the dominant approach), they suggested that the broad complex of issues raised in the dialogue had a direct bearing on whether Marx's work was deemed internally consistent.

In his poignant concluding remarks, Alan Freeman said that the "new approaches" hope to free Marxian value theory from the morass of technical complications and to return to its simplicity. He recalled the explanation of capitalism and socialism given by Harry McShane, the Scottish labor militant and Marxist-Humanist thinker. "This is capitalism," McShane had said, holding one hand over the other. Inverting the position of his hands, he had concluded, "this is socialism." In the context of the mini-conference, in which Marxist-Humanist participants had stressed the inverted relation of dead to living labor as capitalism's *differentia specifica*, it was clear that McShane's simplicity was not a naive one, but a profound one indeed.

Despite sometimes heated exchanges, participants expressed a desire to continue the dialogue. At the conference's end, they took steps to preserve the ad hoc working group that had convened it.

—A.K.

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Youth

Houston Baker's rap misses reality

by Maya Jhansi

Houston Baker's new book *Black Studies, Rap and the Academy* (1993) raises a very important question: What is the relationship of today's Black intellectual to the urban reality of masses of Black people in the U.S.? To answer this, Baker attempts to forge a relationship between academia and the inner city through rap. Ultimately, however, it's the revolutionary character of the Black dimension which reveals the theoretical limitations of Baker's postmodernism.

In the first chapter of the book, Baker gives a brief history of the movements of the '60s which instituted Black Studies in academia. The student and civil rights revolts of the 1960s transported inner city Black youth to academia's forcibly opened gates—a phenomenon Baker aptly describes as Black immigration. With this immigration, Baker argues, the "inside," academic world and the "outside," Black world collide in "brilliant kaleidoscopic allegiance" (p.11). Akin to many postmodernists, Baker describes the revolts of the '60s as a moment of historic disjuncture with the past.

BLACK STUDIES AND POSTMODERNISM

Central to this argument is Baker's description of Black Studies as simulacrum. The idea of simulacrum is taken from the French postmodernist, Jean Baudrillard. In general, it means image, but Baudrillard uses it to describe a society where images have replaced reality. The image, he argues, no longer refers to a reality outside of itself but signifies the absence of reality. As Fredric Jameson put it in *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, the "peculiar function" of the simulacrum "lies...in the derealization of the whole surrounding world of everyday reality." Though Baudrillard bases his critique of society on the idea of the simulacrum, he so totalizes the reification of society into the image that the critique of society is lost.

Baker uses the idea of simulacrum to argue that Black Studies also doesn't refer to a reality outside of itself because it embodies the moment when the world of urban Black youth collided with lily-white academia. It thus always already has an implicit and necessary relationship to Black urban life. Because the revolts of the '60s altered everything, he assumes a continuity between the urban youth origins of Black Studies and the academic scholars it has since generated.

This assumed continuity ignores the differences between the '60s and the '90s. In the 1960s, a mass movement brought inner city Black youth to the gates of academia. In the 1990s, the relationship between Black academics and the inner city is willed through theoretical means alone—inner city Black youth, 50% of whom are unemployed, are today more marginalized than ever.

Because, according to Baker's logic, the relationship of the Black scholar to Black urban life is mediated abstractly, the Black scholar approaches inner city Black life, not through the masses, but through its cultural expression—rap. Rap is accessible to the logic of simulacrum because it is an already reproduced sound, a commodity. Rap provides the means for the Black scholar to simulate the experience of Black urban life.

RAP OR REBELLION?

The L.A. rebellion reveals the shallowness of Baker's attempt to relate to the inner city: the rebellion inspires Baker to call for an increased engagement with rap as the "sounding space of opposition." Rap, he argues, disrupts the homogeneity of national life through its heterogeneous form. In his essay "Scene...Not Heard" from the anthology *Reading Rodney King, Reading Urban Uprising*, Baker argues that Rodney King, a 25-year-old representative of Black youth, has no voice in either the beating, the trial or the "aftermath." (See "Reading the L.A. Rebellion" by Jim Guthrie, N&L, March 1994). Where Baker hears Black youth is through rap. Rap at the expense of rebellion becomes the signifier of Black urban life.

Poor people bulldozed out of Golden Gate Park

San Francisco, Cal.—Hundreds of people demonstrated on the steps of City Hall in early March to protest Mayor Frank Jordan's MATRIX program. MATRIX is a multi-departmental crackdown on homeless people which criminalizes sleeping and eating in public as well as panhandling and sitting on the sidewalk. Thousands of people have been arrested since MATRIX began last August. The most recent demonstration was against the arrest of over 20 people who sleep in Golden Gate Park.

Shortly before dawn the previous week, police and city workers bulldozed camp sites in Golden Gate Park. They arrested anyone who tried to run away. Hundreds of homeless people, many of them youth and families, sleep in makeshift camps in the park. They were given no warning of the predawn destruction of their homes, nor the chance to move their belongings to safety.

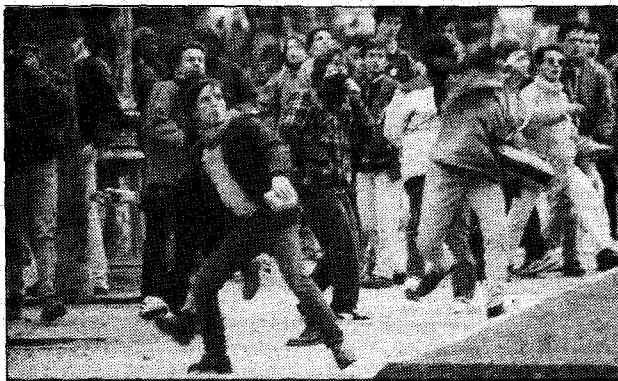
One young woman who was arrested said, "I didn't know what was happening. There were flashlights and when I tried to run a cop grabbed me. They said camping was illegal and I know that. It's just that we don't have any other place to sleep. The ones who cooperated were fined a hundred dollars for sleeping in public. Those of us that tried to get away were charged with resisting arrest and taken to YGC [Youth Guidance Center, Juvenile Hall] or 850 [Bryant, the city jail]."

—Lynn Hailey

It is true, I think, that rap expresses the rebellion of inner city Black youth, and it certainly puts the U.S. cops and racist white society on trial. In it sounds from past and present are collaged and arranged in an irreverent appropriation of bebop, jazz, rock and roll, etc. What is key, of course, is the rap, the "lyrics" (an outdated term) which verbalizes the resistance of the Black youth. It is the human voice which gives force to rap as a musical form. However, what does it mean to recognize this voice of revolt in the cultural (and now very commodified) form of rap—but then not hear the voices engaged in the actual disruption of national life in the moment of urban rebellion? This is a weakness that derives from one's theoretical ground. The logic of the simulacrum cannot conceptualize actual rebellion.

In fact Baker refers to our time as "postrevolutionary." Revolution is replaced by "disruption" and "subversion" through culture. It is thus resistance within alienation. The contradictions that barrel through the sounds of rap such as the violent misogyny of many rappers discloses this. What Baker ignores is that national culture, as Fanon pointed out in *The Wretched of the Earth*, moves and develops during revolutionary movements in ways that anticipate the new. Struggles for liberation give "rise to a new rhythm of life and...develops the imagination."

Mass demos rock France



The massive demonstrations and open revolts of students and young workers that spread across France throughout the month of March forced right-wing Prime Minister Edouard Balladur to meet with student leaders on Monday, March 28. At the meeting he suspended a government decree allowing people under 25 years old to be paid as low as 30% of the \$1,000 a month legal minimum wage and promised to develop a new policy that would "put an end" to the youth wage.

On March 25, over 200,000 university and high school students and young workers flooded the streets of Paris demanding the policy be repealed. Mass demonstrations occurred simultaneously in Marseilles, Toulouse, Grenoble, Lille, Velence, and Nice.

In some cities the protesters blocked off highways and railroad tracks. In Besancon about 500 youth forced a 45 minute delay in a Davis Cup tennis match between France and Hungary by blocking the stadium with a human chain. In Nantes over 400 youth built barricades in the streets the night before and fought off police attacks by throwing gasoline bombs.

These actions came after weeks of increasingly militant activity, including a street battle in Lyon where youth fought police with baseball bats. The mass actions of the students in Paris, such as the blocking off of a railroad station for more than two hours on March 23, coupled with unemployed youth engaging in mass looting and pitched battles with the police in the working-class suburbs of Paris, raised fears among the bourgeoisie of a return to the worker-student unity of May 1968.

Balladur had originally tried to defuse the emerging protests by modifying his proposal by creating a three tier system where youth with top degrees would be excluded from the policy, and youth with technical degrees would be paid 80% of the minimum wage. This attempt to divide workers and students, however, only caused the movement to grow more quickly.

"We're tired of being known as the generation that doesn't care about anything," a student said. "This movement is a pretext to express our general unhappiness."

—Jim Guthrie

Pro-choice for teens too!

San Francisco, Cal.—When I go to demonstrations and rallies for pro-choice, I see a lot of older people who are always talking about how "abortion is a right; after all we are consenting adults." But I think that abortion is a right for everyone, not just adults.

When I got pregnant last year and had to have an abortion, my mother was supportive of me. But what if she hadn't been, what if she had not let me? Because of parental consent and notification laws I might have had to have a baby. I was only 17!

Parental consent and notification make it so that you have to tell and/or get permission from both of your parents. Even if my parents were divorced and I hadn't seen one of them since I was a baby, I would have to get their permission. But I think that if they aren't in my life now, then it isn't any of their business. That would be really embarrassing!

The anti-choice people say that it would bring families together. But they aren't my family! Something like having a baby when you are not ready to would be just the thing to tear my family apart.

—18-year-old Latina

Mission H.S. walkout

San Francisco, Cal.—Walkouts and demonstrations at San Francisco's Mission High School continue because the district refuses to listen to student leaders and will not implement a culturally sensitive history program. Rallies, marches, and student speakouts happen on an almost weekly basis and tension between students, teachers, and the administration grows.

Sighting lack of sufficient funds, the district has refused to allow students to celebrate Black History Month or Women's History Month, refused to incorporate Asian and Latino history into the present curriculum, and refused to purchase books for the school library that are about minority leaders and cultural pride. Mission High is a primarily Latino/a school in the Mission district, a working-class neighborhood.

—Marxist-Humanist youth

Youth in Revolt

by Marna Leber

The Defense Ministry in Spain is concerned because they may not find 100,000 draftees each year anymore. The Movement for Conscientious Objection has been campaigning for five years and is now celebrating its results! In 1993, one in three 18-year-olds registering for the draft declared conscientious objection. This year, nearly half the people eligible for the draft, are expected to express ideological, political, religious, or ethical opposition to military service.

* * *

Thirty Ukiah High School students in California, grades freshman to seniors, showed their support for the Chiapas, Mexico, rebellion by wearing red bandanas that read, "Zapatista National Liberation Army." Fifteen were suspended for refusing to take them off when ordered to by school officials. The day before the demonstration, student organizers distributed a flyer which read in part, "We don't know much about the ZNLA. It remains to be seen whether its leaders are really interested in liberating the poor people of Chiapas....We can show our support by wearing red bandanas. It isn't much, but it is something. And it could mean a lot."

* * *

A one-day strike in Russia closed colleges and universities in all parts of that country. Academics and students picketed government offices and gathered in campus rallies protesting the lack of government support for higher education. Demonstrators are demanding that the promises made by Yeltsin's government for education to be a top priority be met. Most academics earn only \$25 a month, less than 20% of what is made working in a factory.

Racist mascots protested

Chicago, Ill.—Over 50 people gathered on Friday, March 11, at the University of Illinois at Chicago to protest racist, dehumanizing stereotypes of Native Americans, such as UI's Chief Illiniwek. The mascot comes out during the halftime of basketball and football games and performs a mockery of a Native American dance to the sounds of stereotypical music and hand-clapping, which is done over the head. A Seminole called the dance an outright insult to Native American culture.

Supporters of Chief Illiniwek believe that this mockery is actually a celebration of Native American culture that is done in respect. These supporters also argue that the Chief has been a tradition since the 19th century. Such claims mean nothing, as Native Americans have repeatedly called these generalizations slanderous.

As long as this "tradition" is maintained, the University will continue to receive certain funding from the Illini Alumni Association, which threatened to cut off a number of these funds if the school logo were to change.

Some of the groups that organized and took part at the demonstration included Humanity Allied Against Racist Mascots, Native American Students for Progress, Progressive Resource/Action Cooperative, and Women of All Red Nations. Protesters took turns speaking through the monophone, and towards the end of the rally, they marched in the vicinity of the Illini Union chanting, "This racist mascot's got to go" and "We don't want the Chief no more!"

Mililani Trask, a native of Ka La Hui, Hawaii, spoke about the struggles of native Hawaiians and the failure of the U.S. to recognize their identity. As she asked those present at the demonstration to imagine Hawaii, she knew these imaginations would be a stereotypical image created by the tourist industry's commercialism and artificial portrayals through television programming. The presence of this type of commercialism in Hawaii shows us that the struggle against racist stereotyping needs to be a broad one.

—Vijay Jhansi

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Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The assassination last month of Mexican presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has thrown Mexican politics into a new state of turmoil and uncertainty. Though President Salinas quickly named Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon to run for President in Colosio's place, the aftermath of Colosio's murder has brought forth deep divisions within the PRI. Some party factions have gone so far as to blame opposing factions for Colosio's murder, reflecting the extent to which the PRI is riven with internal strife and division.

Yet the truly critical division in Mexico was posed by the Chiapas rebels this year, when they put the spotlight on the depth of the division between rulers and ruled in Mexican society. Because their continuing revolt has far more long-term significance than the divisions among the rulers, it is important to take note of the latest

Algerians protest violence

A murderous Iran-style fundamentalist movement is now close to taking power in Algeria after two years of civil war which has already cost 2,000 lives. The war began after the military cancelled elections which the fundamentalists seemed poised to win. In recent months, attacks by fundamentalist guerrillas have grown.

In February, fundamentalists distributed leaflets calling on women to wear the veil (hijab) or "await the dagger." On Feb. 28, 17-year-old high school student Katia Bengagna was murdered by fundamentalists as she walked down the street unveiled. Facing down these death squads, on March 8, International Women's Day, hundreds of women demonstrated in Algiers, carrying flowers and photos of victims of the fundamentalists. According to the exile paper *Iran Times*, the women chanted slogans such as "Not Iran, not Sudan, Algeria is Algeria" and "Against the Islamic Hijab."

On March 22, more than 50,000 mainly women marched in the streets of Algiers against fundamentalist violence, workers went on strike, and newspapers published with one blank page in protest. Two more unveiled young women were gunned down March 30.

Key Western powers like the U.S. and France seem almost to have conceded victory to the fundamentalists. Such a victory would have a major effect on the Arab world.

The fundamentalist attacks on women are part of a larger ethno-religious "cleansing" campaign. Like fascist movements everywhere, they attack left and liberal intellectuals, independent women, and foreign residents. In late December Yussef Sebti, a well-known poet, died after fundamentalists slit his throat, the eighteenth prominent intellectual to be murdered. Also in December, Larissa Ayadi, a Russian woman married to an Algerian man, was shot to death shortly after fundamentalists had warned all "foreigners" to leave the country.

The corrupt and unpopular military government has responded to the fundamentalist uprising by death squad-type killings of suspects and by massacres of whole communities believed to have supported the rebellion. This type of indiscriminate violence has only hardened support for the rebels. Many observers even accuse the military of having caused or at least allowed some of the killings of leftist intellectuals, who were often its opponents as well.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

events in Chiapas itself.

Hundreds of representatives from Indian communities and organizations in Chiapas together with the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) continue to debate the preliminary accords reached with the Mexican government on March 2. Major points include construction of schools, health clinics and infrastructure improvements (roads, electricity, water); new laws to implement land redistribution, autonomy for local indigenous government and investigation into the impact of NAFTA on Indian communities. The government agreed to begin implementing the reforms in the following 30-90 days.

After centuries of repression, exploitation and neglect, the Indian peasants of Chiapas have refused to wait any longer for legalistic sanctions to take back their land. By some estimates, over 34,000 acres have been reclaimed by peasants since the EZLN uprising on Jan. 1.

Near the town of Bachajon in southern Chiapas, 70 families took over the Santa Clara cattle ranch that was originally communal farmland until it was seized by a rancher over 175 years ago. A peasant representative explained, "A cattle rancher buys up the best land and leaves us the steep hills to work...When we try to organize to fight back, they call us agitators and throw us in jail. Who can we complain to? The cattle ranchers are the mayors, the judges and the PRI officials. We have no place to turn."

On a latifundia north of Ocosingo, Indian peasants began occupying 4,500 acres. Many had lived for generations on the Jotoaquil farm, working for the same landowner family. According to one peasant leader in the area, "We have never met the Zapatistas and we never even heard of them until Jan. 1, but we are totally in support of them ideologically."

Another peasant described how everything changed after Jan. 1: "If we had done this [occupied the land] in the past, our little houses would have been burned already, we would have been beaten and taken to jail, maybe even killed...The ranchers now are scared. They know they can't do things they used to do."

Bosnia 'peace' agreement

The Bosnian-Croatian agreement worked out over ten days in the U.S. embassy in Vienna and signed March 18 in Washington, D.C. is the latest result of the February U.S.-NATO military intervention. The agreement sets up "ethnic entities" within Bosnian territory controlled by Bosnian Croats and Muslims, to be federated with the Croatian state.

The Clinton administration promised Croatian leaders financial aid, "Partnership for Peace" (junior NATO) membership and, most importantly, pressure on Serbia to give up some portion of the 70% of Bosnia it brutally seized and occupied. Russia also concurred that a larger federation including Bosnian Serbs, its "allies," could be a "useful element of the overall settlement."

The Clinton administration, together with European allies, has also proposed lifting UN economic sanctions against Serbia in exchange for some territorial concessions in Bosnia and has also indicated willingness to recognize a Bosnian Serbian state. This type of settlement is nothing less than partition. The grounds for the U.S.-brokered, post-Cold War "peace" codifies Serbian aggression, sets up the boundaries for future war and is unalterably opposed to the struggle for a multiethnic society for which Bosnians have been fighting.

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her recreation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

Mexican government in turmoil

While Mexican President Salinas has reined in his soldiers during peace talks with the EZLN, local ranchers and businessmen have begun a campaign of intimidation and murder against supporters of the uprising.

The EZLN has refused to disarm or retreat from the areas in Chiapas it still controls. They are also disputing the government's misinformation which has attempted to present the March 2 accords as a nearly final document.

South Africa on election eve

Following the March 28 carnage left by armed clashes between followers of Inkatha Freedom Party's Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and Nelson Mandela's African National Congress leaving 31 dead in downtown Johannesburg, South African President F.W. de Klerk has imposed a state of emergency in the Zulu-dominated Natal Province, supported by Mandela.



As April 27, the date of the first elections ever in which the Black majority will be able to vote, draws closer, tensions in South Africa have reached a boiling point. With African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela's slate poised to win on April 27, the Black masses of the so-called homeland of Bophuthatswana (Bop) rose up against their white-installed ruler, Lucas Mangope. In alliance with the rightist Inkatha movement and white fascists, Mangope had resisted efforts to allow local Blacks to vote on April 27, claiming that Bop was an independent country.

By March 8, students were battling Mangope's police force and civil servants were on strike. As the army and police wavered, Mangope called on white neo-fascists to come to Bop to aid him. Several thousand did so, armed to the teeth, and began shooting randomly at Blacks on the streets of the capital. At that point, the Bop army and police went over to the people, opening fire on the fascists. It was all over in three days.

Many are wondering if a similar uprising can occur in Kwazulu, the fiefdom of the heavily-armed anti-ANC Inkatha movement. The white government has begun to distance itself, in light of revelations that it armed Inkatha, but it is unclear whether they are willing to pull out the rug before April 27. ANC support is growing, even in rural areas of Kwazulu, where traditional chiefs allied to Inkatha have long held sway.

With Inkatha still armed to the teeth, with tens of thousands of even more heavily armed white neo-fascists allied to it and with much sympathy for the latter among South African soldiers and police, few are betting that April 27 or its aftermath will be peaceful.

After several years of compromise with the white regime, Mandela has left many questions unanswered as to the nature of the post-April 27 regime. One of the issues is that of the land, something which was raised dramatically when thousands of Black peasants met to demand return of land stolen from them by the white minority. Another issue is that of Mandela's relationship to the white-dominated political-military-police structures, the very structures born of apartheid. What does it mean when the ANC calls upon the South African military to move into Kwazulu or applauds their takeover of Bop? What type of new compromises are being forged?

El Salvador's voting fraud

Long-awaited elections held in El Salvador March 20 were marked by massive fraud. The official results, with the neo-fascist Nationalist Republican Alliance (Arena) at nearly 50% of the vote total and the leftist Democratic Convergence at around 30%, were scoffed at, not only by the Left, but even by *The New York Times*, whose March 23 editorial charged that "significant instances of fraud" barred hundreds of thousands of people from voting. This occurred when their names never made it onto the voting lists, while at the same time dead politicians such as Arena founder Roberto d'Aubuisson were not only on the list, but recorded as having voted as well!

The official turnout was only 54%, no higher than in 1984 in the midst of the civil war and an election boycott by the Left. This was true despite the fact that popular participation in rallies and debates was higher than at any time in recent memory. A runoff is scheduled for April 24 between the rightist Armando Calderon and the leftist Ruben Zamora, but there is little hope that the voting rolls will be significantly more inclusive by then.

That the Left scored 29% even under these circumstances is a signal that millions of Salvadorans—workers, peasants and urban poor—who braved death threats and other forms of abuse to vote, continue to demand revolutionary change in a society still dominated almost completely by a handful of landowning families whose army and state have received billions from the U.S. "save" the country from Marxism.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Unemployed make capital 'competitive'



by B. Ann Lastelle

Helene Curtis on April 7 terminated 57 non-supervisory security guards. They were replaced by Pinkerton guards, who do not earn the relatively high wages nor receive the benefits Helene Curtis employees do. Management claimed this move will save one million dollars in the next year, which they will invest in the business.

The head of operations, who made the announcement at a series of employee meetings, reminded us that the key to job security is remaining competitive globally. The implied threat was that we production workers, too, could find ourselves unemployed if we didn't continue to acquire new skills and improve the production processes.

WHO IS NEXT?

The question in most people's minds was: Who is next? Business is slow, and there already are temporary workers in every department as assemblers, packers and stock handlers—the same jobs Helene Curtis employees perform. One woman told me that even during a layoff in 1984, the company continued to use day labor.

My supervisor the next morning had written at the top of our daily assignment sheet: "Work smarter, work together toward 1 common goal as a team!" The goal is production, he said at our kickoff meeting. Our priority is keeping those lines running and making rate. The whole point is that we need to improve continuously.

Whatever words corporate management, bourgeois economists or President Bill Clinton choose to use, this phenomenon is nothing more nor less than the 1990s version of what Karl Marx described in *Capital*. The development of capitalist production—the use of ever more technology and relatively fewer workers—produces an army of unemployed laborers. Once that unemployed reserve is created, the capitalists turn it to their advantage:

(Continued on page 3)

Black World

L.A. rebellion not over



by Lou Turner

Editor's note: This month I have turned my column over to Gene Ford, who spoke to a community conference in South Central Los Angeles on April 30 on the second anniversary of the 1992 Los Angeles rebellion, sponsored by the L.A. 4+ Defense Committee.

We are present today at the second anniversary celebration of the Los Angeles rebellion, a revolt which shocked and shook the governments of the world to their very foundation. It rattled the roof of the U.S. Justice Department and the White House, where even today the old cobwebs of conservative thought linger on from the Reagan-Bush era into the Clinton administration.

While the color Black continues to be revolutionary in history, the falsifiers of history have criminalized it. The government continues to push to make Black "Public Enemy #1" to take responsibility for the crisis the country is facing. The "Willie Horton" stigma has become a permanent feature haunting white America.

Six years ago the Bush campaign played upon racism and middle-class white society's fear to win the presidential election. This mystical fear has intensified with the visual image of the beating of the white trucker Reginald Denny at the corner of Florence and Normandie Ave. So that when the L.A. 4+ Defense Committee states, "Don't leave our brothers hanging," to me, it doesn't only mean hanging for what they supposedly did on April 29. Rather, it means that the system wants to use their trials to issue a death sentence on the L.A. rebellion as a whole.

This mystical fear has been transformed into a political tool of Black petty-bourgeois politicians, like Jesse Jackson, whose ideological bankruptcy has made them lose sight of the need for a mass movement. Like the white politicians who manipulate the fear of the white suburbanites, the Black politicians feed off the fear of Blacks living in the inner city—a fear of gangs, drugs and guns.

(Continued on page 8)

Mandela, ANC come to 'power' in historic election—

What next in South Africa?



Women in South Africa help a friend, too weak to walk herself, to the voting station.

by Lou Turner

"One person, one vote" has perhaps for the last time in Africa disclosed nothing short of a revolution against white domination with South Africa's (SA) first all-race elections, April 26-29. With this final act of the national independence movement envisioned by an earlier generation of men like Nelson Mandela, who will become SA's first Black president, Africa has crossed a generational rubicon. "One person, one vote" also represents the first act of a new stage of social struggle against a so-called de-racialized state.

With disciplined determination Black SA transformed a self-limiting act of bourgeois democracy, that is, casting a ballot, into an irrepressible act of freedom. Not only South Africa but the world has experienced a sea change in what we have hitherto known to be the form and substance of the modern world. For most of the twentieth century South Africa had been the quintessential bastion of white supremacy and Black degradation, a violent landscape where protest always walked in the shadow of massacre, a technologically developed outpost which still wore the visage of Hitler.

Then as if out of nowhere, and almost forgetful of the

last four years of massacres and "negotiated settlements" used by the apartheid state to forestall the inevitable, Black South Africa emerged en masse from every township and farm, from every factory and campus, from every office building and mine, from every "bantustan" and white kitchen. What had appeared over the last two decades as township marches, student demonstrations, industrial strikes and spontaneous uprisings now took on yet another organized form of resistance. When it was over and everyone returned home, the results were as undeniable as they were historic: the ANC had come to power in a government of "national unity" with a powerful electoral mandate.

POLITICAL OUTLINES OF NEW STATE

The ANC will come close to, if not exceed, the two-thirds majority needed for it to unilaterally change the provisional constitution. With the National Party (NP) of apartheid South Africa's last president, F.W. de Klerk, polling nearly a quarter of the vote, de Klerk will become one of two deputy vice-presidents under Mandela. Thabo Mbeki, South African Communist Party (SACP) politico and architect of the ANC's path to state power through "negotiated settlement" and political concessions to the Afrikaners, will likely be the ANC's choice for deputy vice-president. The most important political structure, however, will be the 27-member executive cabinet which will contain, along with the ANC and NP, representatives of any party which got at least 5% of the vote. That will include the Black right-wing Nationalist Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) of KwaZulu chief Gatsha Buthelezi, as well as the far-right Afrikaner Freedom Front, an alliance of white supremacists and neo-fascists. Mandela has also promised a cabinet seat to long-

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On the Inside

We Need Your Help To Continue!

"The most difficult of all tasks that have confronted every generation of Marxists is to work out Marx's Marxism for its age," wrote the founder of Marxist-Humanism, Raya Dunayevskaya, adding that no generation has ever faced a more difficult task than ours. Surely the contradictions have never been darker than those confronting us. The question, she said, is which kind of "darkness" will today's events prove to be—twilight or dawn?

● We confront the continuing horrors perpetrated in Bosnia that define it as the "Achilles' heel" of all of Western "civilization." We see new faces of neo-fascism arising not only in Russia and Germany but now in Italy, where the "Italian Ross Perot," business magnate Silvio Berlusconi, will for the first time include outright neo-fascists in the government. At home, we face a supposed "anti-crime" campaign that answers the problems of poverty and permanent unemployment with more and more prisons.

● Against all this, we witness a new historic moment in South Africa where the mass movement which has won the right to a vote is now striving to become the determinant for the future. We see the Zapatistas in Chiapas opening the door to a new form of worker-peasant struggle. And at home we find new battles waged by workers ranging from janitors to truck drivers. You will find all these struggles reflected in our pages.

* * *

The question is not whether the revolt will continue to upsurge from below. The question is whether that can bring the movement for freedom to daylight without us confronting the task of projecting a pathway out of today's darkness. It is that responsibility that N&L is striving to meet and that makes its survival urgent. Nowhere else can the writings of the founder of Marxist-Humanism be heard in every issue along with essays and theoretical discussions in dialogue with all the forces of revolt. Nowhere else has

any revolutionary organization responded to the myriad crises we face today by digging into a crucial study of Marx's roots in the Hegelian dialectic.

Never was it more important to keep alive and expand the circulation of a revolutionary journal like *News & Letters* where all the voices of revolt—of rank-and-file workers, women, youth, the Black dimension—can be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of revolution for our age. BUT WE CANNOT CONTINUE WITHOUT YOUR HELP!

* * *

We continue to have no paid staff, but our bills for rent, printing, and postage continue to soar. Today's economic crisis has hit us just as we know it has hit you. At every point since N&L began in 1955, we have been able to keep going only with the help of our readers. We turn to you again to help us pay our bills and to gain new readers:

PLEASE GIVE AS GENEROUSLY AS YOU CAN OF YOUR SUPPORT AND YOUR IDEAS! WE CANNOT CONTINUE WITHOUT THEM!

NEWS & LETTERS, 59 E. Van Buren, Room 707,
Chicago, IL 60605

☐ Enclosed is my contribution \$_____ to help keep N&L going.

☐ I am enclosing \$_____ for gift subscriptions (addresses enclosed).

☐ I enclose \$_____ for the *Raya Dunayevskaya Memorial Fund* to help keep her works in print and continue the organization and presentation of her documents to *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection* at Wayne State University's Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs.

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Woman as Reason

by Terry Moon

Representatives from more than 170 countries met April 4 through 22 to ready a plan of action to be presented Sept. 5 in Cairo at the UN's third International Conference on Population and Development. What occurred there was unprecedented. Women changed the very ground of the debate from one of controlling women's fertility by any means necessary to calling for free choice in family planning, universal access to contraception, the right to safe abortion, women's equality and primary school education for all girls throughout the world.

To do this, women had to battle entrenched population experts like Princeton Professor Charles F. Westoff who warned that "a new divisive issue has surfaced: the feminist agenda." His fear was this "agenda" aimed at "making women the subjects and not the objects of population policies." Yes, exactly. And to do so women had to deepen our battle against Pope John Paul II whose allies at this conference included Islamic fundamentalists and leaders of several Latin American countries.

Women were ready. Immediately after the Vatican attacked the proposed plan of action as lacking "a clear ethical vision," of promoting abortion and of being "marked by an extremely individualistic understanding of the person and of human sexuality," a coalition of more than 25 women's groups from eight countries denounced the Vatican's "current attempts to weaken references to contraception, sterilization and abortion and to undermine women's rights both as individuals and as members and heads of households." These women rejected the Pope's sterile separation of human sexuality from the individual woman and insisted on every woman's right to control family planning, how many children to have and when, to high quality health and reproductive care and safe, affordable abortion.

Nafis Sadik of Pakistan, the executive director of the UN Population Fund and the conference secretary general, told the Pope off: "I told him there are 1 billion Catholics and 4.6 billion others in the world and the UN has to cater to all of those groups....Latin America has the highest rate of illegal abortions in the world. There is a desire to do something about fertility and they [women] are doing it any way possible....Abortion should be safe and not result in deaths." Sadik was speaking of the four million induced abortions taking place annually in Latin America, where abortion is illegal in every country but Cuba; of the 200,000 women who die every year from illegal butcher abortions and the 300,000 additional women who die each year after becoming pregnant.

It was these totally unnecessary deaths; it was the objectification of women as wombs-to-be-controlled that Westoff and his ilk call for; it was the pushing of Depo-Provera and Norplant, hormonal contraceptives that offer no protection against AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases, and were "tested" on Third World women where follow up was often impossible, and many were coerced into taking them or simply lied to; it was these conditions that compelled women health advocates from Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the U.S. and Western Europe to meet in September 1992 and fashion a powerful statement to help transform population policies worldwide.

The "Women's Declaration on Population Policies" was finalized by over 100 women's organizations, and over 2,000 organizations and individuals from 105 countries have signed it. Just a few sentences show the ground established by this document that helped transform the April conference: "We call for a fundamental revision in the design, structure and implementation of population policies, to foster the empowerment and well-

'New' NARAL conference

Chicago—"Reproductive Rights: A Grassroots Perspective" marked the public emergence of the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League of Illinois' (IL NARAL) educational and grassroots effort. The move to be more bottom-up rather than top-down has built over the past five years in the organization.

The topics for the conference, April 16, were chosen carefully to reinforce the expanded mission to the public at large, as well as specifically to other groups fighting battles for women's rights. Including discussion of population control politics, abuse of reproductive technologies, abortion access and lesbian parenting, the workshops reflected IL NARAL's increased work in these areas, while inviting others to the table. Malcolm X College was carefully chosen as the site to be accessible and comfortable for a wide cross section of people interested in ensuring the safety of women's health.

I cannot express enough how excited I am about the work we are doing and the foundation that is being laid that includes all women, not just those who are in circumstances that enable them to have the most safe reproductive choices. The proposal from the floor to have mini conferences already is being set in motion. The first round table is scheduled for June at the IL NARAL office at 100 E. Ohio. It will continue the excellent panel I attended on "Choosing our Families: Lesbian Parenting," an understudied and complex topic. Subsequent discussions will be held every month.

People should know that May 18 is National Call-In Day on National Health Care. Women's organizations nationwide are encouraging people to call the government. Contraception, childcare, abortion, pre- and post-natal care, PAP smears and mammograms must all be included in affordable health care for all women.

—Larra

Population debate transformed

being of all women....Women must become subjects, not objects, of any development policy and especially of population policies."¹

This movement did not begin in 1992. It began at the first International Women's Year conference in Mexico City in 1975. There, where the official delegates, one-third of them men, kept denying that women were oppressed in their countries, the important part of the conference was the unofficial body of 5,000 women who came on their own. The fruits of their determination to transform the lives of all women were seen at the UN Conference on Human Rights in 1993 where finally, after decades, women's rights were at last recognized as human rights.

What Raya Dunayevskaya wrote in 1977 of the International Women's Year conference held in Houston, Texas, singled out what was the driving force that has persisted and developed these past 20 years: "[I]t was clear that it was not what was done there at the conference that was the most important, but what remains to be done afterward. That task was recognized as the one to be done by themselves, not left to those 'above.' It was recognition of Self as social being, Women's Liberationists in action."²

1. "Women's Voices '94," Race, Poverty & the Environment, Summer 1993.
2. "TWY: where to now?" Raya Dunayevskaya, News & Letters, December 1977.

♀ Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey



More than two years after Black Peruvian feminist and revolutionary activist Maria Elena Moyano was brutally murdered and then blown up in front of her children by the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), eight suspects have been arrested. Since Moyano's death, her supporters worked to keep her ideas alive. In late 1993, the Peruvian women's movement celebrated Latin America No Violence Against Women Day with the publication of the book, Maria Elena Moyano: In Search of Hope.

A Superior Court judge in San Diego, April 21, stopped the Center for Unplanned Pregnancy from continuing to lie to women by false advertising. The ruling bars the phony clinic from performing pregnancy tests and advertising in the yellow pages under "clinic," "abortion service provider," "birth control information" or "pregnancy options counselling." In addition, the center must tell every caller that its counselling is "from a Biblical anti-abortion perspective" and it neither performs abortions nor provides abortion referrals. Planned Parenthood hopes this ruling will trigger legal action against the more than 2,000 other bogus clinics across the country, most of whose staff have no medical training.

Iranian feminists fight fundamentalist oppression

Chicago—Shouting "Down with oppression, long live freedom!" Dr. Homa Darabi, a distinguished psychologist, set herself on fire in the streets of Tehran, Iran to protest the human rights violations of the government of the Islamic Republic (IRP), particularly those aimed at women. Darabi was fired from her teaching position at Tehran University for not observing "proper hijab" (mandatory Islamic clothing) a few years ago and her repeated requests to be reinstated were denied by the government. Darabi's death created a wave of outrage among Iranians in exile. Memorial meetings were held in a number of cities in Europe as well as in the U.S. In Chicago nearly 100 attended a memorial in which Manijeh, an Iranian feminist who was arrested and tortured by the government in the early 1980s, spoke passionately about the abuses of the IRP.

What is encouraging, however, is that in the midst of the brutal suppression by the Iranian government, a new feminist consciousness continues to grow. Shahrnush Parsipur's novel, Tuba and the Meaning of the Night (Tehran: As Asparag Press), 1989, has become the subject of tremendous interest in Iran as well as rave reviews in exile journals. The author was briefly jailed by the Is-

'Where are the women of Bosnia now?'

New York—A meeting entitled "Where are the Women of Bosnia Now?" was sponsored by Columbia University Students Against Genocide on April 6. It featured a documentary, "War Crimes Against Women," and included discussions by the film makers, a male survivor of three concentration camps, and two counselors from the Balkan Rape Crisis Response Team. While exposing the ongoing fate of thousands of raped and displaced women, the meeting also explored relationships among rape, war, violence, nationalism and feminism. Even as we spoke, we were reminded that the raping and killing continue daily.

In the film, made last year in Croatian refugee camps, women who were raped repeatedly in Serb military detention centers calmly describe the events, and then are seen interviewing other women to record their stories. The film features women who are devoting their lives to collecting evidence for a war crimes tribunal in the hopes that the truth will provoke the world to action and bring punishment to Serb leaders and soldiers. One of the two women who made the film, Karmen Jelincic, told the meeting she believes the U.S. is delaying plans for a tribunal in order to use it as a bargaining chip in its negotiations with the Serb aggressors.

In international politics, it seems, women's lives count for nothing. But the film showed that women who survived the systematic mass rapes are speaking out, no longer too ashamed, and feel compelled to fight for justice.

The other film maker, Mandy Jacobson, talked about the reason they made the movie: "Where are the voices of the women who have been raped? Why have we heard nothing in the media since the original blitz about the numbers who have been raped? The women are made to appear mute, vulnerable, nothing but victims."

THE VOICES OF RAPED WOMEN

"We asked the women there, 'What is unique about mass rape?' Each woman's experience is initially personal, but then she realizes she was raped because she is seen as the property of other men. Their own governments discuss the situation of 'our women'—property again. The women are further stigmatized and victimized by the media, who run around sticking microphones at them and asking if they were raped, and by humanitarian groups which do things like set up houses known to be for raped women only. All these things increase the distance between 'them' and 'us.'"

"Bosnian women are raising many questions," she said. "This may be the first time in history that anyone has listened to women during wartime. Women are asking, what is the connection between mass rape and violence against women in peacetime? They are struggling around issues of war and nationalism. They are organizing and working out different ways of healing themselves and getting on with their lives."

According to Rebecca of the Balkan Rape Crisis Response Team, there are 200,000-500,000 Bosnian women in Croatia alone, living in refugee camps and in relatives' overcrowded homes. They receive some care and counselling from feminist and social service organizations, but not nearly enough.

Rebecca's colleague Marie described the rapes as genocide because they destroy not only the woman but the whole community. She said most raped women lose their lovers, loathe themselves, fail to understand that their symptoms of trauma are normal, and end up isolated.

RESISTING DESPAIR

Marie deplored the fact that rape victims and the people around them, including many counselors, view rape with such despair. Other kinds of wounds, she pointed out, galvanize community support that in turn helps healing. She advised that helping women to reintegrate into their communities is the best resistance to this genocidal war. Marie blamed the international community for permitting the Bosnian genocide to persist, attributing this to its acceptance of misogyny, violence, and racism.

—Anne Jaclard

lamic Republic but continues to write and publish. Tuba deals with the lives of four generations of women in the context of 20th century Iran. Four aborted social movements form the background to the novel, beginning with the Constitutional Revolution of 1906 and ending with the guerrilla opposition movements of the 1960s and 1970s. As the country comes to grieve the lost opportunities for a more democratic and humanist society, so the women in the book have to face the reality of their unfulfilled and aborted dreams and aspirations.

A new feminist journal Zanan (Women) began publication in Tehran over a year ago, publishing moving interviews with working women, women prisoners, prostitutes and many others. The journal, which has to be very careful because of IRP censorship, has nevertheless managed to translate articles by U.S. feminist writers such as Susan Faludi. A series of articles on Islamic jurisprudence and family law attempted to present a feminist response to the mullah's conservative reading of Islamic texts. The journal even defended the rights of exiled Iranian women and has publicly asked the government why so many educated urban women have had to leave the country.

—Neda Azad

Teamster strike ends; debate begins

New York—As freight drivers returned to work Monday, May 2 after 24 days on strike, many said they didn't know much about what was in the tentative agreement. From the communication received from the International union, it seems we beat TMI (trucking management's bargaining group) on low wage part-timers. Opinions range from a Roadway driver—"There isn't much money in this agreement, but the strike wasn't over money, it was over part-timers"—to a driver from a carrier that wasn't struck—"We were sold out" (on the money, rumored to be \$1.35 over four years plus \$1.25 toward health and pension).

The International claims victory on part-timers, on TMI's "fall-back position" of \$12-an-hour casuals who currently make \$14.45, and on taking away pension and health benefits from casuals who now get them. It looks like a draw at best on the railroading of freight, another big issue in the strike. TMI currently rails 10%, wanted 35% and will get 28%. Road drivers affected must be offered a road job at another location, and only 10% of road drivers can be affected over the next four years. This is better than nothing, but it sounds like it means choosing between losing your job and uprooting your whole family to move to another state. The union also gave concessions that new hires will take longer to get to full pay, and dock casuals will be frozen at \$14.45.

A question we ask is why, if we started to win, did the union settle at this time? Could we have won more if we had stayed out longer? Why did the 400 local union leaders supposedly refuse to endorse this agreement? Some say the union settled before we lost more jobs to the non-union companies who carried the freight during the strike. One driver wondered if we settled now because after 30 days on strike they can hire scabs. Many drivers don't feel there was ever a question of scabs; there was

no way the companies could have gotten away with it.

We went into this strike knowing it would cost jobs but with no choice when faced with the demand for half-pay part-timers. In coming weeks, it is we, the members, who will vote on this agreement.

—Freight Teamster



New actions oppose lockout

Editor's note: Workers at A. E. Staley, members of Paperworkers/AIW Local 837, have been locked out since June 1993 for refusing to concede all of their rights to management. A Solidarity March for Social and Economic Justice was held on April 9, the 26th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination while in Memphis to support striking Black sanitation workers.

Decatur, Ill.—There have always been Black workers at Staley, although not that many. Out of 760, maybe 70 are African American. A group of us got together to make the community aware of the need to stick together, get everyone involved. We do have some union members who haven't received this idea so well. They don't understand what the outreach is about. The rally showed that the purpose of our fight is not just to save unions, but for all the things we share.

Unemployment is mounting. If the union members can't find jobs and neither can their families, they are going to have to go out and find some other way to support themselves. People talk about family values, but can you afford to have family values? They talk about morals, but how moral can you afford to be if there's no money in your pocket? The 12-hour shifts Staley wants affect family life, too. The march was trying to get across how our jobs affect everything.

—Black unionist

Some new things have been happening this year with the direction of the fight against the lockout. Back in February, we blocked the gates of Staley. It was the first time we actually blocked both gates.

There was a protest against the lockout by women and children at Staley's main office building March 9. It had to do with International Women's Day. The purpose was to keep Staley in the public eye, to make people realize that our fight includes women and kids.

—Locked-out Staley worker

Vicious anti-union law

Detroit—The most vicious anti-union legislation in decades in Michigan, giving absolute dictatorial power to district school boards over teachers, was rammed through the state legislature during the latter part of April. Present Michigan law prohibits public employee strikes, but it can be enforced only if damage can be proved irreparable, thus giving teachers' unions power to negotiate contract terms. Nor does the law specify any penalties.

The new law, slated to go into effect April 1995, transforms everything and includes the following:

- Teachers will be fined a day's pay for each day on strike, and unions will be fined \$5,000 a day.
- Unions cannot even bring up for negotiation hours of work, conditions of work, length of school days, class size, non-teacher services, volunteer services, pilot programs or school academies, start or end of school years, privatization of school services, or installation of new technology.
- School boards can impose their last offer onto teachers after a 30-day period.

This last provision is so powerful that a board can set anything it wants in a contract. If teachers go on strike as a result, in a period of 30 days they'll lose some \$7,000 in wages, the union will be fined \$150,000—and they will still be forced to accept the board's last offer.

In short, the law gives each school board totalitarian control over teachers. A Detroit teacher said, "This law sends a clear message that children are expendable. There is no future for them in this society, so we should not waste money to educate them."

—Andy Phillips

40,000 Czech trade unionists protest

by Stephen Steiger

Prague, Czech Republic—While there was a single, "united" trade union organization in the Czech Republic under the old regime, during the years following November 1989 half a dozen of them emerged—most of them without great significance because they were artificial creations of political parties. Attempts at constituting new unions, truly independent and revolutionary in spirit, out of the strike committees which played a very important role in overthrowing the Communist regime in 1989 were not successful. The "old" unions developed into a strong movement called now the Chamber of Czech and Moravian Trade Unions (CMKOS).

Three main points of contention with the parliament over amending the labor code caused a strong trade union protest: the raising of the retirement age; lifting of the ban on work agreements for a limited time period only; and allowing night work of pregnant women. A petition against the raising of the retirement age was signed by 630,000 people, yet it remained without any effect either on the lawmakers or the government.

Lobbying in the parliament proved to be both weak and ineffective. The trade unions called therefore for a massive demonstration on Prague's Old Town Square on March 22. Ridiculed by the press, the mass protest brought together about 40,000 unionists from all over the country—far more than anyone, including the unions' leaders, had expected. The parliamentarians, however, pretended the matter was wound up and could not be considered seriously any more. The demonstration can thus be held to have been only an important warning for the future.

CMKOS officials profess an "understanding" of the problems of the present period of "transformation" of the Czech society, proclaim its support of parliamentary

democracy and try to materialize the demands of the members by "peaceful" means only. Their position is weakened also by constant attacks by the media and, as any other institution that has survived the Communist regime, they have lost much of their authority with their members.

Needless to say, the newly emerging class of rapacious and ruthless businessmen is trying hard to push back the unions inside the enterprises, claiming a total "freedom" for the owner to rule his business without any restriction. Neither is the government, of course, a friend of the unions.

The CMKOS held its congress on April 8 and 9, and most of the 1,457 delegates representing 3.5 million workers were rather in a fighting mood. While none of the "radical" candidates for chairmanship was elected, the trade unions, showing their strength by mass mobilization, have unmistakably put up the sign of possible showdowns should their members feel threatened by government policy once more.

Janitors reject two-tier

Chicago—The contract between Local 25 of SEIU, which represents janitors in the downtown office buildings, and BOMA (Building Owners and Managers Association) ended April 10. The owners only want to give us a one-year contract and 25¢ raise, that's it. They want to pay newcomers only \$7 an hour. Our rate is \$10.40 now.

We just want better benefits and better working conditions. When I started working here 15 years ago, we only had to clean 2½ floors each, and now we have over four. We have to fill out reports about what time we're where and how long it takes us to do that space. I have to sit in the lobby, too, because we have to do security. Half the time I don't even have time to eat my lunch. We have to finish our work in the eight hours because they will not let us have overtime.

We pay \$75 quarterly for union dues. Some of the stewards are real idiots; they go along with the supervisors. The medical sucks and the benefits aren't too hot. It seems like every time we get a raise, the union gets a raise in dues. But if we didn't have the union, we would get pushed around a lot more and we would get less in wages. That's the only thing that's keeping me here, the money.

Local 25 is 10,000 strong. We have everybody backing us—the electricians, the elevator starters and the engineers, and from what we've heard the letter carriers will not deliver mail into the buildings if we're picketing outside. So if we do go on strike, we have all this going for us, but people are still afraid. They're afraid of losing their jobs. That's why the union is just protesting in front of the BOMA buildings right now.

—Woman janitor

Four people were laid off at a building in June of last year. It says right in the Local 25 contract that the building management isn't supposed to hire anybody new while people are still laid off. They went out anyway and hired a temporary worker for \$7 an hour. The BOMA was getting away with this even before asking us to accept it in the new contract.

I have been working 15 years in one building, but it doesn't mean anything to them. By me making \$10.40 an hour and then being laid off, they can hire someone for \$7 an hour. They want to create a stranglehold on the people.

—Janitor

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

"...[T]his surplus-population...forms a disposable industrial reserve army, that belongs to capital quite as absolutely as if the latter had bred it at its own cost. ...[I]t creates, for the changing needs of the self-expansion of capital, a mass of human material always ready for exploitation..."

"The over-work of the employed part of the working-class swells the ranks of the reserve, whilst conversely the greater pressure that the latter by its competition exerts on the former, forces these to submit to over-work and to subjugation under the dictates of capital..." Strong words! Strong words that describe exactly the cold, calculating, inhuman way capitalism operates.

SUBJUGATION MASKED

Today's industrial reserve contains many whose employment is extremely irregular and whose wages and conditions of life sink far below the average—like those day laborers who work at Helene Curtis. And the over-work of the employed, our subjugation under the dictates of capital, is masked by words like "competitiveness," "continuous improvement," "team concept," "total quality management" and "common goals."

In these oppressive and confusing times, when labor "leaders" and many workers seem intent on proving themselves essential to capital (as though capital could exist without labor), what can we do? One thing is to clear our heads about the nature of capitalism and the forms it assumes in the 1990s. Another is to search for those workers and workers' movements who are differentiating themselves from capital and from the labor "leaders," workers who are willing to declare their independence from capitalism's "common goals."

Celebrate May Day the whole month

Discover labor's true history!

The American Federation of Labor "was itself involved in racism with its demand for the 'Chinese Exclusion' act, not to mention racially separate locals for Negroes. Its indifference to the unskilled was to cause such isolation from the Negro that it would become impossible to organize heavy industry without breaking away from that craft union stranglehold."

"And yet in the 1880s it formed the transition from diffuse to concentrated labor struggles...it was the A.F. of L. which sent delegates to the newly formed second Marxist International and got it to approve the American suggestion for a general strike, world-wide if possible, for the eight-hour day."

"Since a similar demonstration has already been decided upon for May 1, 1889, read the International Resolution, 'this day is accepted for the international demonstration.' As we see, far from May 1 having been 'imported' from Russia, it was exported the world over by American labor."

American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard

For information on ordering this Black and labor history pamphlet, see page 7.

From the Marxist-Humanist Archives

The dialectics of labor, and the labor of dialectics

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

August 30, 1949
Dear [Johnson],

Please forgive the disorganized form this letter will of necessity bear. I am trying to get down in rough some of the ideas which have been bobbing in my head in preparation for our discussion, and would rather it "write itself out" than wait for a logical order to give it form.

First, there are three developments in Lenin's approach to dialectics. In 1900 he is in prison where he has finished *Development of Capitalism in Russia* and he begins to read Hegel, Kant, and the "French naturalists." The result is an "organization plan" which is consummated in 1902 in *What Is To Be Done?* (This little fact ought to be worth something to us when we get down seriously into the dialectic of the party. Why did I never before note that he read philosophy just before he worked out the party?—Probably for the first time as the works "What the 'Friends of the People Are'" and *Development of Capitalism in Russia*, seem to show only a second-hand knowledge of dialectics; he mastered *Capital* and relied on Marx for his logic as well).

In 1908 he rereads and the result is *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, a certain "degeneration" you might say to have to return to elementary epistemology, but unavoidable because concretely the counter-revolution in Russia brought god-seekers right within its ranks.

[In] 1914-16 there come the magnificent philosophic notebooks and from then on nothing, absolutely nothing, fails to bear the stamp of Hegelian dialectic.

The more I read Lenin's notes the more I am led to the objective situation, or objective world-connections as he would call them. And the deeper I get into the dialectics, the softer I get to my "enemies": first it was Plekhanov who began to make sense, at least within the historic context; then I began to appreciate Luxemburg's attempt to find a fundamental economic cause for imperialism....I am even ready to forgive Trotsky his [theory of] permanent revolution. 1903 is such a damned important year! It was too abstract and definitely did nothing for him; but it was an expression of what the proletariat was preparing. Something was in the air. Lenin creates a category: the party. Trotsky creates a category: the permanent revolution. And in 1905 the Russian proletariat bursts forth. What they did is lost both upon Lenin and Trotsky, although the former, being the concrete "feeler," sees if not the soviets, at least the counter-revolution. Indeed the counter-revolution—"betrayal" of liberal bourgeoisie, establishment of bourgeois monarchy, penetration of bourgeois ideology into Marxist party—taught him more than the revolution. But here precisely is where hindsight should make us go back to this objective world-connection, with new sight.

At every stage in the development of capitalism (indeed in the development of humanity at all stages, but I am interested here only in capitalism) revolts occur. First they may be blind protests, but I doubt since the Luddite riots they ever were just blind. No, in each case the workers not only revolted but created a new "form" of how they would run society. It is defeated and little parts of the program "stolen." That is how capitalism moves on. This, in turn, defines the character of the labor movement. The capitalistic stamp of the labor movement is that of the defeated revolt.

Soviets arise in the first period, trade unions in the second. Let me put it another way. In the first period—in the period of revolt—the proletariat shows an entirely new mode of life, a truly human way of living, producing, enjoying. It smashes the old to smithereens and says, Here is how it should be done—soviets, not factory slavery; soviets, not bureaucratic hierarchy; soviets, not standing army; soviets, not monopoly of education. That is true in every period, long before the Russian proletariat in 1905 gave it its distinct form and class content.

For example, even as far back as the 1820s in America, the workers organized themselves simultaneously in unions and labor parties and demanded not simply higher wages but higher education, and then even when they had to compromise and organized unions, it was on the scale of Knights of Labor, that is, a social organization. The unions as a business organization reflected the stages of capitalistic production; that is, only after the defeats does the labor movement reflect the movement of capitalistic production, and that movement too is what the capitalists "stole" from

1. Lenin's *Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic* (or simply *Logic*) can be found in *Collected Works*, Vol. 38. Appendix B of Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom* (1958) was the first published English translation of Lenin's philosophic notebooks.

Editor's introductory note

The three-way correspondence which developed among Raya Dunayevskaya, C.L.R. James, and Grace Lee (Boggs) from February 1949 to January 1951 is currently the subject of considerable attention by both scholars and left activists in the United States and in Europe. Some of this scrutiny has uncovered new moments in the struggle to re-create the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic for the post-World War II world.¹ Other recent discussions have served only to misrepresent the correspondence, without ever allowing readers a chance to examine it for themselves.

We are therefore proud to publish, for the first time, one of the more than 50 letters from that intense philosophic-political-organizational probing. All of these letters are included in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection* (#1595-1734 and #9209-9290), but none have been previously available in any widely circulated form. In future issues of *N&L*, we hope to publish other letters from this rich and historic correspondence.

When she summed up the "25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S." in 1980,² Dunayevskaya returned to 1949-1955, the period of Marxist-Humanism's birth, calling it "a new stage of production, a new stage of cognition, a new kind of organization." She wrote:

"Automation initiated a new stage in industrial production. And since our age refuses to keep the objective and the subjective in totally separate compartments, it was during that period that I was working on three things at one and the same time: 1) I was active in the Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 during the day and evening; 2) Late at night I was translating Lenin's 'Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic,' sending these translations with covering letters to Johnson (C.L.R. James); 3) I was working on a book on 'Marxism and State-Capitalism.' These three activities led to a three-way correspondence between my-

1. See Kevin Anderson, "Lenin, Hegel and Western Marxism: From the 1920s to 1953," *Studies in Soviet Thought*, 44:79-129, 1992; Peter Hudis, "Introduction," *The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism*, *News & Letters*, 1992; and Lou Turner, "Epistemology, Absolutes and the Party: A Critical Examination of Philosophic Divergencies within the Johnson-Forest Tendency, 1948-53," *C.L.R. James: His Intellectual Legacies*, University of Massachusetts Press (forthcoming).
2. Raya Dunayevskaya, *25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.: A History of Worldwide Revolutionary Developments*, *News & Letters*, 1980. See also "A 1980s View: The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.," *News & Letters*, 1984.

the workers. When the turbulent 1880s had gone and the heart-breaking 1890s sounded the full triumph of big capital—even then the workers rose not merely to ever higher heights, but to new horizons, new categories. Such a new category was 1905 when the Russian proletariat showed how society can look. Once that is defeated, the counter-revolution runs high not only in Tsarist Russia but on a world scale and...the genuinely capitalistic law of motion, unhampered by revolts, reveals itself and heads directly for World War I.

The pre-1914 Marxists thought that this law of collapse would bring the revolution automatically, and from then on no one need worry about socialism. I will not stop here to show that the "growing revolt" is what gave capitalism its movement (I believe it can easily be established in co-operation, manufacture, and machinofacture, and I will try to be prepared for that in the discussion) but wish merely to limit myself here to two things: (1) technology; (2) competition. Somewhere Marx says that technology sets the mode of production, etc., and this has often been repeated, but what has been forgotten is that the same paragraph states that a true history of technology would show it was not great men who discovered, but great masses. The names we all repeat in a bourgeois manner—from Watts to Edison, from Bessemer to Ford—built no foundation and Andrew Carnegie summarized the bourgeois attitude perfectly when he said, "Pioneering does not pay." Marx moreover points out that even after the discovery has been made (that I believe is in [Capital] Vol. 3) and "applied," it doesn't actually operate till after the workers in the factory have applied [it]...

(continued on page 5)

A letter by
Raya Dunayevskaya from
the 1949-50 'Three-way
correspondence' with
C.L.R. James and
Grace Lee (Boggs)

self, Johnson, and Lee (Grace Lee Boggs)."
When the 1949-50 correspondence was penned, Dunayevskaya, James, and Lee were co-leaders of the "State-Capitalist Tendency," also called the "Johnson-Forest tendency" after the party names of C.L.R. James and Raya Dunayevskaya. So pivotal did that correspondence prove to be for the divergent future development of all three participants, that Dunayevskaya insisted:

"To grasp the divide within the State-Capitalist Tendency as it grappled with the Hegelian dialectic and the historic re-birth of Marx's Humanism, it is necessary to look at the three-way correspondence..."

The correspondence began with Dunayevskaya's translation of Lenin's 1914 study of Hegel's *Logic*, in February and March 1949, and the cover letters commenting on Lenin's work, which she sent to C.L.R. James. Dunayevskaya noted the marked differences between Lenin's views of the *Logic* and those outlined by James in his 1948 study, *Notes on Dialectics*. She called attention to the importance Lenin had placed on Hegel's Doctrine of the Notion, concluding that Lenin saw the Absolute "as the method of absolute cognition, and as criticism of all Marxists, including himself."

James did not respond to the stream of letters from Dunayevskaya until June 10, 1949, and in his discussions with Lee contended that "Lenin is more concerned with self-movement than he is with Notion." By then Dunayevskaya was absorbed in a study of Lenin before and after the 1914 philosophic writings, followed by a series of letters on "how the dialectic affected the varying structural changes in Capital, as well as the objective development of capitalist production from the end of the 19th century to the present."

Dunayevskaya's letter to James of August 30, 1949, which we publish here, is drawn from this latter period of the correspondence. Although James, Lee, and Dunayevskaya all agreed that it was necessary to continue the dialectical studies after 1951 by focusing on Hegel's Absolutes, only Dunayevskaya did so. In her book, *Philosophy and Revolution*, Dunayevskaya wrote that she considered her subsequent 1953 letters on Hegel's Absolutes "a new divide within Marxism between those who stopped at the economic analysis of Russia as state-capitalist and those who proceeded to develop the Humanism of Marxism for the state-capitalist age."

We look forward to the widest possible discussion of this and other letters from the 1949-50 correspondence.
Michael Flug, Marxist-Humanist Archivist

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From the Marxist-Humanist Archives

(continued from page 4)

The second thing is: When is the invention introduced? Again we have been bourgeois in our answer; we have said competition forces [the capitalist to introduce it], but Marx shows that competition is only a reflection of declining rate of profit, and it is also only a reflection of growing revolt. A labor-saving device is introduced to get rid of rebellious labor, to simplify operations so that women and children can be introduced into the factory, and meanwhile the worker is always grumbling: Why do it this stupid

of being abstract, but of being "violently" so, instead of going to higher and truer abstraction. But before you can go higher, you must go lower. You must explain how the abstract theory of value works out in the concrete phenomena of the market. Don't yell: Value is the essence; price is merely the phenomenon. Show how the two unite. First, you have to introduce further distinctions into value, c/v [the proportion of constant capital to variable capital]; then you have to show that rate of surplus value and rate of profit are not identical ("violent abstraction")² but, on the contrary, the manner in which one is transformed into the other, means only value is creative of surplus value, etc. In other words, before you can explain the phenomena of the market, you must go to the higher abstraction of a theory of surplus value and you thereby have both the logical development and the concrete distinctions, opposi-

gidity to which the understanding has reduced everything." And "freely associated men," "consciously regulating" their production, seeing the future in the present can "break up the rigidity" and strip off the mystical veil...thus we get to the notion not only of the bourgeois but of the proletariat.

All this Lenin saw as he read Hegel and when he came to write *Imperialism*, he included his Critique, or attitudes of thought (classes) to objectivity (imperialism). Now the outline of the book (pp. 197-8 of *Notebooks on Imperialism*)⁷ reveals this:

- "IX. Critique of Imperialism
1. Critique—the general idea
2. Apologists (Fabians)
3. Petty bourgeois democrats
4. Kautsky vs. Hobson (Kautsky and Spectator, NB)
5. Forward or backward?
6. Free competition vs. duties, dumping, etc.
7. Export into dependent countries
8. Ultra- or inter-imperialism?
9. Political traits of imperialism (diplomacy) (reaction) (national oppression)"...

After the definition that he is here dealing with attitudes of classes to this phenomenon [of imperialism]—which is so overwhelming that not only small and middle but [even] very small capitalists have made a wholesale transition to the side of imperialism, and this moreover is true not only of the possessing classes but permeates also the working classes—he settles down to the 3 attitudes⁸; (1) Subjective idealists, or bourgeois scholars who defend imperialism and (a) obscure its complete domination and (b) its profound roots while (c) they emphasize only details and reforms. (2) Cynical, frank imperialists who admit absurdity of reforming. (3) Petty bourgeois critics, with which is merged Kautskyism who tells capitalism what it "ought" to be, the pious wish of those who, not "recognizing" the ground of imperialism is capitalism (trusts) itself, try to contrast imperialism with free competition and democracy as if it were a matter of choice and policy instead of the inevitable result of concentration [of capital]; that is, they forget the "qualities of imperialism."

Now I will not further stress the parallel to Hegel here, but I do wish to bring out that in the outline of this, as of all works following, is the unity of opposites and the fact that every single thing without exception can be transformed into its opposite, and only on the basis of a higher unity can the struggle for socialism continue concretely. Thus in these *Notebooks*, Lenin takes up also Pannekoek and even where he defends him against Kautsky he writes: "This formula (the struggle for socialism) is incorrect. The struggle for socialism consists of the unity of the struggle for immediate interests of workers (in correspondence to reforms) and struggle, revolutionary, for power, for expropriation of a bourgeoisie for overthrow of bourgeois government and of bourgeoisie."⁹

And so Lenin had left even Lenin of 1914 behind when he still wrote that socialization of labor "is bound to" lead to revolution...

7. Page numbers are from Russian language edition. English translation is in *Collected Works*, Vol. 39, p. 241.
8. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 285.
9. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 39, pp. 270-1.

way, when this way would be better....All this the great dead machine soaks up into its brain and the voice of the worker is lost. When we have worked this out completely, we will see that the growing revolt has been as much forgotten as the smashing of the state machine.

Let me add one final example in order to be able to bring in who is Marx's enemy. When capitalist production "moves on its own," it is promptly overcome by stagnation and parasitism. You see it when the Chartist movement met defeat in 1848, English production moved on to its "golden age" and sclerosis set in immediately although it did not immediately bow to "Yankee ingenuity." Now this golden age in turn corrupted the proletariat, the higher strata. Marx said they were bourgeoisified, but he ignored them and their leaders. (He went looking for lower strata instead.)

They were not the real enemy. The real enemy was Ferdinand LaSalle. Why? It is not only after the plunge to freedom that the positivist and not the reformist is the main enemy. The impatience of the calm-looking positivist to get "immediately to the absolute" means forgetting these unskilled workers and playing around with—Bismarck. LaSalle saw the unions and their opportunism; he was such a "revolutionist" and abhorred [the unions] so that he even invented the theory of the iron law of wages to show they could not accomplish anything for the proletariat, while he set off to "capture" the state to bring in socialism in hot-house Bismarckian fashion. Lordy, how we keep repeating the mistakes of the past: can't you see in him Bukharin? That is the law, the law of thought and the law of activity.

I have tarried too long here and forgotten Lenin in 1914 as he moved from official Marxism to true Marxism. He clutches onto Engels's criticism of the Erfurt Program (Where were all the "loyal" Marxists in 1901 when that 1891 devastating criticism was finally published? There is something in that of the movement of capitalistic production) and especially so to the statement on concrete vs. abstract [labor]. Lenin's philosophic notebooks are permeated with that and the references are all to value and Ricardo and Hegel and Kant. Now, Marx accused Ricardo not

tions, and you need not "spirit away" [constant capital] but rather emphasize it. Everything lies in the how; just as how surplus value is realized showing not market but expanded reproduction, so how ratio of surplus value becomes rate of profit will show, on the one hand, [constant capital] ever expanding but producing naught, and on the other hand, value ever-shrinking but producing all that is produced.³

You say that every time you reread [Lenin's] *Imperialism* you are led to Capital, and every time you reread that you are led to Hegel's *Science of Logic*. Yes, and I am immensely impressed with Lenin's statement that the whole of the *Logic* must be understood before the first chapter of Marx's *Capital* can. There is movement there that not only explains the being, pre-bourgeois society; it explains the being, the essence, and notion. Marx begins [Chapter 1] with Section 1 or the dual character of commodity; then in Section 2 he deals with the essence or dual character of labor; in Section 3 he returns to being, but the forms of value are not simply cast, but rather from the elementary form of value to the universal form, he "plays" on the highly dialectical I-P-U [Individual-Particular-Universal]⁴ and finally in Section 4 he deals with notion.

First he tells us that the whole fetishism arises from the form, the fantastic form which makes relations between people appear as an exchange of things. But immediately thereafter he states that the very discoverers of the theory that labor was the source of all value are as mystified by the form. Moreover, there seems to be contradiction in his materialism, a shifting of ground, when he explains Aristotle's failure to get to the common substance of all different use-values because he lived in a slave society, whereas free labor has to assume "the fixity of a popular prejudice" before you can see straight; and at the same time he says Adam Smith-David Ricardo lived in the latter type of society and still did not "understand"; only "freely associated men" can.

Now it seems to me that they did not understand precisely because they were men of Understanding—the old man you so masterfully revealed in the Nevada document.⁵ I was led to Hegel's Second Attitude to Objectivity, where Hegel shows that empiricism, in common with metaphysics, "elevates the facts included under sensation, feeling, perception into the form of general ideas, propositions or laws...Empiricism therefore labors under the delusion, if it supposes that, while analyzing the objects it leaves them as they were: it really transforms the concrete into abstract." And finally: "So long then as this sensible sphere is and continues to be for Empiricism a mere datum, we have a doctrine of bondage..."⁶

"The battle of reason is the struggle to break up the ri-

2. See Dunayevskaya's letter of Jan. 5, 1949 (#9210): "I have often quoted Marx's statement that Ricardo by a 'violent abstraction' transformed rate of surplus value into rate of profit. I would add that without showing how this was done meant the failure to work out the relation between the labor theory of value and the phenomena of the market, and so the labor theory of value flourished until Marx who was not inhibited by a 'bourgeois skin' showed the answer and thereby created his theory of surplus value." For Marx's discussion of this, see *Capital*, Vol. I, chapter 11.

3. See Part IV, "Marxism: The Unity of Theory and Practice," *Marxism and Freedom*, pp. 79-149, for a full discussion by Dunayevskaya about Marx's *Capital*.

4. "Now that we are in the Doctrine of the Notion and meet its central categories of Universal, Particular, and Individual, these powerfully illuminate what Hegel intimated in the *Phenomenology*, when Absolute Knowledge 'announced' that these categories define the movement of the whole 'system,'" Dunayevskaya, "The Science of Logic, or Attitudes to Objectivity," *Philosophy and Revolution* (1973), p. 25.

5. "The Nevada Document" by J.R. Johnson was later published as C.L.R. James, *Notes on Dialectics*.

6. Hegel's *Logic*, *Dialectics of Philosophical Sciences*, para. 38 (should not be confused with Hegel's larger *Science of Logic*).

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Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation,*
and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution

To order any of these works by Raya Dunayevskaya,
see literature ad on page 7.

CELEBRATING MAY DAY, 1994, AS AN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF STRUGGLE

I have been a garment worker for 21 years. We are among the most exploited in the country. Our salaries are extremely low. We have no benefits. Our conditions are very bad. There is no place to eat, sometimes no drinking water, sometimes no toilet paper. Bosses frequently insult workers and sometimes hit them. Whenever we ask for something, they threaten to move our jobs to Mexico.

Of the 200,000 garment workers in the U.S. only perhaps 1% have a union. Our Committee of Garment Workers is trying to find an existing union to assist us or make us a part of their union. Our problems are not unusual, labor conditions are worsening everywhere. Workers are looking for alternatives to hunger and that is why groups like ours are forming.

Garment worker
California

* * *

Marxist-Humanism is more and more important for our society, especially in Mexico, where the political and social crisis has reached both the middle class and the poor population. The state party, the PRI, cannot contain the movement of the masses any longer. The great dinosaur refuses to die, but people are more and more aware of what's happening and want to participate in the struggle. They want the kind of democracy that is not just a word but what the whole nation is looking for.

Teacher
Mexico City

* * *

The article on Chiapas in the March issue of *News & Letters* showed many similarities with the problems of indigenous people here in India. Here there is not an armed struggle with the government but a "cold war" that might become an armed struggle. Pity that the leadership is very opportunistic.

Pilar
India

* * *

The problem inherent in the G7 job summit conference was its government-managerial nature. To successfully solve the problems they described they would not find themselves in the picture. To address the pattern of heavy overtime, they looked at a reduced work week to increase employment, but it was hardly at the top of their agenda. We weren't invited, but any real solution to the problems has to involve workers' self-management of industry. It requires new ways of thinking and living. It is futile to look to management or government to lead us to a new order. We have to look to ourselves and those we work with to find the answers to the problems imposed on us by capitalism.

Joseph Blough
Detroit

* * *

The extreme in capitalism which is coming to life today is prison labor, as in China. I don't mean the use of outright prison labor, but the fact that the whole country is a prison labor farm run for the benefit of the state-capitalist elite.

They know the soul of business and the global market and aren't afraid of Clinton's feeble appeal to human rights. Clinton's biggest opponents, as your April editorial on China points out, are right here in this country. The capitalists aren't about to let him interfere with their gold mine. China is a magnet for capital in the same way South Africa was in the 1970s under operation "tar baby," as the racist Nixon called it.

R. B.
Oakland, California

* * *

In the recent Italian general election the working class was the great absentee of the electoral campaign. What was discussed was statism and free trade, federalism and national unity, employment and solidarity, but never the class contradictions of this capitalist society. All contenders, Left included, tried to hide them, promising solutions that don't discuss the essence of this society—profit.

Italian workers can expect the colossal national debt to mean a reduction of the welfare state; the pressure of immigrant workers with their low salaries to lead to a cut in wages; work productivity growth to mean growth of unemployment. These are the real problems and this is the ground on which Marxists can act to re-create an internationalist class awareness that can change this society radically.

Iniziativa Comunista
Milan, Italy

* * *

The United Farmworkers of Washington (P.O. Box 200, Granger, Wa. 98932, 509/839-4903) is calling for a boycott of wines produced by the mainly Mexican American farmworkers at Chateau Ste Michelle and Columbia Crest vineyards. For five years they have fought the companies for union recognition. Real wages have fallen some 15% over the past five years and workers routinely put in 60 hour weeks with no overtime pay. Most earn less than what the government considers a poverty wage. The two companies are owned by UST Inc. (formerly U.S. Tobacco), among the most profitable of Fortune 500 corporations. In 1991 UST recorded a profit of more than \$400 million.

Farmworkers supporter
California

* * *

After reading *N&L*, we agree with your struggles against this capitalist, racist, sexist and exploitative society. We constitute a group that is trying to promote a distributive economy, where labor and income would be shared according to the needs of each one. In these times of unemployment, of squandering and of arming for wars, we have something to propose for a more equitable society.

Intersyndicaliste des GSED
Marseille, France

* * *

I am a college junior, studying political science and planning to do graduate work. In my studies I have come to realize that the current capitalist establishment causes racism, unequal justice, and

exploitation of workers and our environment. I am interested in participating in your work. Please send me information about your organization.

Student
Illinois

FANON VS. FARRAKHAN

I thought of Lou Turner's column on Farrakhan (March *N&L*) when I was reading Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* and read this: "It was my philosophy professor, a native of the Antilles, who recalled... 'Whenever you hear anyone abuse the Jews, pay attention, because he is talking about you.' And I found he was universally right..." Turner's column showed both that this is true even when the anti-Semite is Black and how far, far away is the likes of Farrakhan from a Fanon who said: "Since I was not satisfied to be racialized, by a lucky turn of fate, I was humanized. I joined the Jew, my brother in misery."

Women's liberationist
Chicago



HEGEL'S PHENOMENOLOGY AND REALITY TODAY

Maya Jhansi's "Houston Baker's rap misses reality" (April *N&L*) reveals that there is a contradiction between postmodernism and the objective world, but she then dispels these contradictions by treating such phenomena as rap as "worked-out" categories—that is, only as negatively untrue knowledge. The danger of this is that it can very well excuse postmodernism as an "aberration" within and from capitalism, as only an image of commodity fetishism, and inversely, to make commodity fetishism only subjectivistic.

In the introduction to the *Phenomenology* (and in later sections), Hegel reveals that skepticism as untrue knowledge is nevertheless true, for its easy dismissal in a one-sided view is also skepticism, in that it does not apprehend the positive in the negative process of untrue consciousness. Postmodernism has its shortcomings (whether as skepticism, unhappy consciousness, etc.), but it is also true, i.e., determinate and objective, though it should not be conflated with an all-encompassing postmodernity. Simulation and pastiche are no less objective phenomena. But postmodern "incommensurability" cannot lead to the transcendence of the contradictions of capitalism (it is the very perverseness of capitalism), and is challenged in turn by actual freedom struggles.

Steven
Chicago

* * *

In reading the Dunayevskaya Archives column on Hegel's *Phenomenology* (April *N&L*) what hit me was where she discusses how Hegel identified a retrogression that happens in the movement for freedom: "You come to a certain point, and instead of really transforming reality, and giving your life for it, suddenly you begin to say, it's really Faith, and you go backward." To me, that sums up much of what is happening in the world, and in the U.S., today. There is a return to a submission to Faith, on many levels.

Reader
Los Angeles

* * *

I found thought-provoking the intersection of renewed national discussion of the great Black writer, Ralph Ellison (*Invisible Man*, 1952) and Raya Dunayevskaya's "From the Archives" (April *N&L*). Dunayevskaya refers to Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, also written in 1952. Fanon, digging into the roots of Hegel's philosophy, enriched the implications of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*, the section on the master-slave dialectic. Dunayevskaya identifies how Fanon criticized the section from the vantage point of the specificity of Black consciousness, which never received recognition. Dunayevskaya's own letters on Hegel's

Absolutes were first written in 1953. Reflecting on this allows one to see the affinity of Hegel's philosophy, Ellison's "fiction" and Fanon's "new humanism," both as world-historic and as integral to perspectives for a revolutionary future.

Victor Hart
New York

MARCHING AGAINST GENOCIDE

Last month a small group of women and men marched through downtown demanding that war crimes against the people of Bosnia—especially genocidal rape—be prosecuted. The demonstration was called by the Balkan Rape Trauma Response Coalition and the Balkan Women's Empowerment Project, whose members marched together with women from the Women's Action Coalition (WAC), News and Letters Committees and Bosnian refugees.

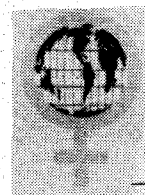
There was something almost unutterably sad about this demonstration. I felt this most strongly when we chanted: "What do we want? Justice! When do we want it? Now!" Whatever demonstration I've been on, I have always answered "Freedom!" to the question, "What do we want?" In a world where the most powerful governments turn their backs to genocide, where Gorazde was falling as we marched, it is only freedom, a new human society, that can bring justice for the dead.

Terry Moon
Chicago

* * *

We marched in downtown San Francisco on April 22 with about 400 mostly Bosnians and supporters including Students Against Genocide and others in the local Muslim community. The demonstration was organized the previous night, after the latest Serb onslaught on Gorazde, to protest the UN and NATO complicity in the genocide against the Bosnian people. Over 250,000 have already been killed. We asked: "65,000 wait to die. Does anybody care?" We cried out "Never Again" is happening again!" and demanded to "Lift the arms embargo now!" For whatever it matters, it was brought out that the arms embargo is in violation of the UN's own charter which gives people an absolute right to self defense.

Marxist-Humanist
Bay Area



WOMEN'S STRUGGLES TODAY

Some 3,500 women participated in the Fifth National Conference of Women here. There were 11 themes discussed in different workshops: Health and Population; Struggle for Survival and the Environment; New Economic Policy; Violence; Sexuality; Communalism; Politics of Organizing; Relationship of Women's Movement with Other Mass Movements; Women and the State; Single Women; Dalit and Tribal Women's Movements. There is a strong awakening of Dalit women (Harijan, which means without caste) and this was very strongly felt at the conference. The awakening of the Dalit women is important because for them to be free would mean a total uprooting.

Women's Liberationist
Bihar, India

* * *

Since Terry Moon wrote the column in the last issue on welfare being an attack on poor women, that attack is growing. The idea being floated is to do away with welfare altogether and use the money saved to build orphanages. This is the gist of a bill introduced by democrat Joseph Lieberman. It reveals a hatred of women so deep that he would tear poor women's children away from them to be raised by the state, rather than help them raise the children themselves. Once the children are gone, to hell with the mothers. They can become homeless or die or turn to prostitution!

Outraged
Bremerton, Wash.

NIXON'S BLOODY HISTORY — UNREVISED



Reprinted from
N&L, May 1972

MAD BOMBER

Nixon was a mass murderer. Clinton's disgusting eulogy for him highlights the continuity between the destruction of Cambodia and the genocide in Bosnia. What's more, Clinton has begun to echo the most sinister of revisionist historians—will he next ask us to judge Hitler on the basis of "his entire career?"

Fred
Chicago

"The reason for Nixon's trip to Peking is to see whether Mao cannot save the 1972 election for him, and after, by allowing what Nixon calls an 'honorable' way out of the disastrous war which he has lost not only militarily, but also politically. And not only the world over, but especially in the U.S., where the indigenous anti-Vietnam war movement has helped create a whole new generation of revolutionaries. The immediate and long term enemy for Nixon is the American masses." —Raya Dunayevskaya, "Nixon and Mao Aim To Throttle Social Revolution," Sept. 4, 1971

IMPRISONING AMERICA'S FUTURE



The caning of the kid in Singapore is a bigger issue than just punishing an 18-year-old white boy for spray painting some cars. People in the U.S. are saying we should cane people here. Beating someone with a cane is torture. The Black man got beat like that 100 years ago. It won't cut down on crime here. People who want corporal punishment here are afraid of the youth. They think we are all out to rape and kill. They say we have no feeling, no remorse. Some crimes are committed by young people. But the military killed Arab babies in the Middle East. We live in a violent world. We didn't create it but we get the blame. Adults are afraid of us because they don't want to look at themselves and say "democracy" and "free trade" don't work. We are the ones with no jobs and no future, nothing to look at and say, "I'm going to be somebody when I grow up." All we have in our future is jail.

16-year-old Black youth
Oakland, California

I recently had to appear before a judge because I was convicted for carrying a concealed weapon. I was carrying this gun because my life had been threatened several times and I felt I had to defend myself. All of this was due to my active defending of the brothers arrested after the L.A. rebellion of April 29, 1992. The judge was going to put me in jail because I had not yet started the community service my conviction required, since you have to pay \$50 just to start your community service.

I haven't held down a paying job since July of 1992 when my brother was arrested. I've spent full time on the defense of the brothers arrested after the rebellion. I used to try to work for the establishment but they never wanted me. Now I can't imagine going to work for the white establishment. My whole

life has changed since the rebellion. I think differently. I want different things for my life, real freedom and justice for all oppressed people. (By the way the judge did waive the fee so I've started my community service.)

Active Participant
South Central, L.A.

Jim Mills' lead in the April issue on "Clinton's criminal code imprisons America's future" correctly called the Clinton administration "Reaganism's 'New Democrats.'" It could be seen clearly at an event at Cal State-L.A. Billed as a "Town Hall" meeting, the event featured Attorney General Janet Reno, Senator Diane Feinstein, and nearly 20 other police chiefs and district attorneys, trying to sell Clinton's crime bill. The audience was not allowed to speak.

Student protesters carried banners saying "Reno gambles with our lives," and "Congress is the real gang of criminals," and held their own rally outside. Several students spoke up against building more jails, and against community policing as totalitarianism. When campus police rushed in to stop the rally by confiscating the sound system, the students began marching around the campus.

Cyrus Noveen
Los Angeles

My son was recently picked up by the Los Angeles Police and charged with murder. They are trying to frame him for something he had nothing to do with. He's never been in trouble before, but now they're trying to label him a gang member. Before this happened, I didn't realize how often this goes on. Now I'm seeing how broad the scope is. You realize it's not just your own personal problem. It's an epidemic. This battle is much larger than I ever imagined. In the situation today, the police don't belong to us, the people, but we belong to the police, and are totally under their control.

African-American mother
Los Angeles

In general, I thought the analyses of both the anti-crime campaign and welfare "reform" in the April N&L were excellent. But both articles neglected to

consider the government's attack on the "underclass" as part of its attack on the working class as a whole. The ideological campaign to turn the "underclass" into villains stems not only from capitalism's inability to solve its social crises, but also from a strategy to divide the "working class" and the "underclass" and thus conquer both. It is our responsibility to let employed, white, and male workers know that the attack is against them, too, and so they had better not buy into it.

Professor
New York

SPEAKING AND BEING 'OUT'

On the self-aggrandizing nature of the white, mainstream, Gay and Lesbian movement: One of the things that people didn't understand in that movement is that being "out" is not simply a statement of self-righteousness. It should be a statement of solidarity, a connection to other people. That got lost somewhere in the shuffle. In fact, solidarity in general has been lost in the shuffle. That's one of the problems that we're facing right now.

Jennifer R.
California

In Mississippi, terrorism is going on against people who speak out and against the lesbians at Camp Sister Spirit. Recently someone shot five shots over my head. Another man who shot at us was charged only with harassment, because women's lives aren't worth anything there. The purpose of the camp is to teach women's studies and organizing, but the neighbors are suing to shut us down. They say we'll cause divorces! We're securing the camp and we're going to protect it. You are all invited to visit.

A.G.
Mississippi

ENVIRONMENTALISM'S DEBATES

What I found most important in Franklin Dmitryev's essay on debates within the environmental movement (April N&L) is that he disclosed why so many environmentalists say we need to live within nature-imposed limits. It is not because they've actually identified

any fixed barriers we cannot transcend, but because they equate human power with its present alienated form—the power of capital—and cannot envision a non-destructive-but-human relation to nature. They would therefore substitute, for the present domination of things over people, a different form of the same thing.

This debate has an important parallel in Marx's analysis of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. Against Ricardo's contention that the falling rate is due to a natural limit (falling productivity stemming from the diminishing fertility of the soil), Marx demonstrated that under capitalism the rate of profit tends to fall despite, and because of, rising labor productivity. Many of today's environmentalists fail to see that the power of capital is not only self-expanding, but self-limiting and self-destructive.

A. Anielewicz
New York

MULTICULTURALISM

It was unfortunate that John Alan entitled his recent column "Multiculturalism excuses status quo." The only evidence offered in defense of this extreme position was the work of Jerry Herron, who critiques assembly line production, not for the way it disciplines workers but rather for its tendency to repress the expression of ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity on the part of workers. But in what sense can the particular views of Herron be generalized into a critique of "multiculturalism"? Would N&L look kindly on those who generalize the failings of particular Marxists into an attack on "Marxism"?

Alan is correct that "neither culture nor racism are autonomous social phenomena, but are 'spiritual' manifestations of America's commodity-producing society." Clearly, the nature of commodity production is to homogenize cultural differences by reducing the varied expressions of concrete labor to its total opposite—abstract labor. In this sense, would it not be just as correct to say that criticism of "multiculturalism" excuses the status quo?

Revolutionary Marxist
Chicago

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Black/Red View

by John Alan

Race Matters, a collection of essays by Cornel West on race, originally published in small liberal/left periodicals, became a best seller when it was published in hard cover in 1993. It has achieved instant notoriety because of the favorable reception it got from President Clinton and Pat Robertson, the "Moral Majority" religious leader. This year Vintage Books published a paperback edition of **Race Matters** with a new epilogue by West.

PITFALLS OF 'MORAL REASONING'

Why do so many middle-class white and Black Americans share an easy identification with West's thoughts on the nature of racism, poverty and social dislocation in this country? On these burning issues West has nothing fundamentally new to say, nor does he ever get to the essence of these problems. A partial answer to this question is that the basic concern of the book is how to harmonize all race and class antagonisms through what West calls "moral reasoning."

Henry Louis Gates Jr. was correct when he characterized Cornel West as "our Black Jeremiah." **Race Matters** is indeed a sermon. West wants to save the democratic ideal of the U.S. as a multicultural society from the imminent threat of "nihilism in Black America." So his sermon to middle-class America is: Black nihilism is created by America's "...market-inspired way of life over all others and thereby edge out non-market values—love, care, service to others..." And it is "the predominance of this way of life among those living in poverty-ridden conditions, with limited capacity to ward off self-contempt and self-hatred, that results in the possible triumph of the nihilistic threat in black America."

West depicts the masses of poor Black people in the inner city slums as being a mass of humanity living in the "murky waters of despair and dread that now flood the streets of black America." They are a people filled with self-hatred because they have lost their culture in a market driven economy.

When West's hopeless humanity rebels, as they did in Los Angeles, he describes the event as a "multi-racial, trans-class" event with elements of an "adolescent carnival" and "barbaric behavior." West, the self-conscious moralist, understands Black urban protest as simply an emotional event lacking conscious reasoning. He thus separates himself from the historic and ongoing African-American struggles for freedom in this country.

Cornel West's "moral reasoning," that is, his moral view of racism in the U.S., places him outside these struggles and at the same time in a position where he can equally blame liberals, conservatives and Black leaders for "concealing the nihilism in black America." No doubt, this moral view has a powerful attraction in a country like the U.S., where race is a violable social division. It places the responsibility for "nihilism in Black America" upon everyone and not on the capitalist nature of U.S. society.

THREAT OF INTELLECTUAL NIHILISM

Why on earth did Cornel West create such a phantom category as "Nihilism in Black America" and offer as its opposite the category "moral reasoning"? We don't know for sure, but he did project an abstract image of "good and evil."

West writes: "Nihilism is to be understood here not as philosophic doctrine that there are no rational grounds for legitimate standards of authority; it is far more, the lived experience of coping with a life of horrifying meaninglessness, hopelessness and (most important) lovelessness" (pp. 22-23).

Here West could be speaking about the absolute alienation of Blacks from U.S. society or their absurd exist-

West's murky intellectualism

tence within it. However, there is no ambiguity about "nihilism" in the U.S. middle-class mind; they have long had an ideological conception of nihilism as an active doctrine of destruction and terror. This was the image in the mind of suburban America at the time of the Los Angeles rebellion. West can't remove that image by saying that the rebellion had nothing to do with race or class.

West's moral view of the race crisis in the U.S. is built on what Hegel, quoting Kant, called "a whole nest of thoughtless contradictions." These contradictions come into being, writes Hegel, because moral consciousness "places the object outside of itself as a beyond of itself." An example is West's critique of the "racial reasoning" on the part of Black leadership during the Clarence Thomas/Anita Hill hearings. The Black leadership practiced "racial reasoning" instead of "moral reasoning" when they failed to view both Thomas and Hill as "two black Republican conservative supporters of some of the most vicious policies to besiege black working and poor communities since Jim and Jane Crow segregation."

This lumping together Thomas and Hill escapes all objectivity because moral consciousness really has no object of its own.

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

Jesse Jackson has turned snitch with his tailing of Bill Clinton's crime policy: "Up with hope, down with dope," and support your local murderous police department. This is not going to change the social and economic conditions which brought forth the rebellion with its flames and bricks, which also exposed the self-destructive mentality of some of our people. Our consciousness was split open and laid bare.

For that concept of who we are to change there must be a movement toward a new consciousness of self, a movement toward a new humanity, a new reality. That is why, as a Marxist-Humanist, I would call for a philosophy of revolution so that the thought and reason of the masses can fully develop.

While rage alone can be suppressed one way or another by the standing army, the consciousness within Black rage should reflect not alone what must be destroyed under capitalism, but also the creative side of the human being actively fighting for freedom.

Where does our creative side blow up, expand, demand to be heard? Has the voice of the L.A. rebellion been heard, or smothered? In other words, today's forum should be a forum for those voices to be heard.

After the L.A. rebellion, the state has offered only the raw rifle butt and the police baton as the solutions to social problems it thinks can be locked up forever. The actions of politicians, Black and white, leads to the conclusion that they are out to criminalize the whole Black community. More police is their "final solution."

So when we search for the meaning of the L.A. rebellion, we have to dig deep into the roots of the cause of the rebellion itself; listen to the voice of those who fought with the passion of self-destructive rage and creative energy over those three days of revolt.

Many say the rebellion was sparked by the 1992 acquittal of the four L.A. police officers charged in the beating of Rodney King. There was no one cause of the rebellion, but many, including the whole social upheaval of Black youth. At the beginning of the rebellion there were many who did not even know of the verdict in the Rodney King beating case. It was police abuse which instigated the rebellion and the hunger for recognition by Black youth.

The LAPD was not able to suppress the rebellion at its beginning because there were so many Florence-and-Normandies happening over the city simultaneously. The rebellion was not on one street corner alone.

It reminds me of the slave revolts of the 1830s that were thought to be inspired by Nat Turner's 1831 insurrection. After his capture, Nat Turner was asked how he had carried out slave rebellions in slave states far from his state of Virginia. He answered that he had no prior knowledge of the revolts, but felt that the same idea of freedom that he felt was transmitted not just through him but affected many others trapped in the Black skin of slavery.

The spirit of rebellion is not a planned out event but takes on a natural organizational form which captures the mood of the times and becomes a historic moment when it does capture the new by which history is made. We can characterize these revolts in the way that Nat Turner's South Hampton slave revolt was characterized: the "touch of the rock which called the water forth" producing the American Civil War.

I think the meaning of the L.A. rebellion is that a flood is coming—it ain't over yet. But the problem lies not in the rebelliousness of the masses but in the fact that the masses cannot shoulder the whole burden alone of actively working out the theory of the rebellion. Those of us who call ourselves revolutionaries must help.

—Gene Ford

Ralph Ellison (1914-1994)

Ralph Ellison, the African-American novelist and essayist, died on April 16. He was the author of **Invisible Man** and many essays on African-American culture and its complex interrelationship with the general U.S. culture. Ellison's place, in the context of Black writers like James Baldwin, comes after Richard Wright and before the present generation of Black men and women writers who are now exploring the anguish and alienation of African Americans either during the post-Reconstruction period or in the present urban Black ghettos.

When **Invisible Man** appeared in print in 1952, Ellison was immediately acclaimed by critics to be a major American novelist for bringing into the U.S. novel a unique and daring theme on the nature of U.S. racism as it appears in the experience and consciousness of an unnamed Black character. The sole purpose of Ellison's hero was to maintain the shaky independence of his humanity against those who would make an object of it by subjecting it to the interests, goals and ideas antithetical to its reality.

Ellison's character encounters many moments of truth in the experience of his endangered humanity. Some are terrifying and vicious, as when the character endures the wrath and betrayal of the Black president of the college he attends, because he had unintentionally revealed to a white philanthropist the ugly reality of the Black poverty and social dissolution surrounding the college. Other moments are complex and confusing, as when the character becomes a respected member of the BROTHERHOOD, a "multiracial rainbow organization" where Black reality is treated as a subversive topic.

Although Ellison's non-hero retreats to an existential hole in the ground to speculate about his alienated existence and the possibility of transcending it, he does send from that hole a powerful message that Black consciousness of self, in the midst of the deteriorating reality of inner city life, can be the beginning of a human America. Because of this message, today's Black and white Americans should hasten to read **Invisible Man**! —John Alan

Fight for prisoners' rights

New York—Andrea Gibbs, a former deputy sheriff who blew the whistle on prison conditions in Mississippi, spoke recently at WAC (Women's Action Coalition). Gibbs was fired two years ago for protesting the mistreatment of prisoners; WAC ran a letter-writing campaign to help bring attention to her cause. Today she works for prisoners' rights with a group called Victim's Voice. The following are excerpts from her remarks:

"Last year when Ben Chaney and I organized public hearings on the large number of so-called suicides in the Mississippi jails, I was able to bring mothers and fathers of the victims to speak. Now Attorney General Janet Reno has sent nine investigators to Mississippi. They have closed eight out of 18 jails as unfit and ordered reforms in the others. All the prisons had to discontinue the 'hole,' which was just that, a torture chamber. But I don't have any illusions that the federal government will stop all the problems.

"The phony suicides continue to take place. This summer is the 30th anniversary of Mississippi Freedom Summer, and Black people are still being hanged, only today they are hanged from steel bars instead of trees. The problem is not only in Mississippi; I get calls from mothers all over the country who have lost children in jail. We help families get autopsies, we videotape the doctors as they do them, and we help pay for funerals.

"Mississippi practices economic terrorism too. If you are not a white man, you are limited in everything you can do. I think the Civil Rights Movement can be born again. You can't keep people down so long without their fighting back. The more the authorities tried to stop me from speaking out, the madder I got, and I tried everything I could until I got heard.

"I'd like the whole world to find out about prison conditions in this country. They are not so different from conditions in El Salvador. Why are we building more prisons and ignoring rehabilitation? The good people in law enforcement are run out and the bad ones have the power. People don't know what is going on until the papers publish it, and then people say, how can they treat human beings this way?" —WAC member

Aristide hits U.S. Haiti policy

Berkeley, Cal.—Sunday, April 17 the Graduate Theological Union at Cal-Berkeley hosted the legally elected Haitian President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Several thousand people came, completely overwhelming the capacity of the church. Before Aristide spoke, we heard from different people: a survivor of the Tontons Macoutes, a U.S. woman who went to Haiti to be a witness, and others who have been working with Haitian refugees. There were repeated appeals to get active again on this issue. Aristide spoke on "Spirituality and politics in Haiti." He sharply criticized President Clinton for breaking his promise to change Bush's policy, which candidate Clinton called "criminal" during his campaign.

Aristide presented his election on Dec. 16, 1990 in Haiti as people saying "no" to politicians who lied. From February 1991 to September 1991, while he was in power, the military had to show respect for human rights and people were flocking back to Haiti! On Aug. 19, 1991 he signed a treaty with Dan Quayle to fight drug trafficking. Within a month he was overthrown. Since the coup, five million tons of drugs per year pass through Haiti on their way to the U.S.

Aristide said, "We are not rich. We were moving from misery to poverty with dignity." You don't want to welcome Haitian refugees in Miami? Great! Help restore democracy in Haiti and people will go back! He described the situation in Haiti now as a "house on fire," with the Coast Guard surrounding it, sending people back into the fire. It is a crime! Haiti helped the U.S. fight for its independence. In the same way Haiti would welcome help to free it again. The spirit of the whole talk was that Aristide sees as his allies not governments, but the thousands of people like those who came to support him here.

—Participant

Spark of L.A. rebellion

South Central, Los Angeles—I think it's very important for people to understand what really started the blowup at Florence and Normandie. What began the anger was that many Los Angeles Police Department cars came to 71st and Normandie (one block from Florence) at about 3:30 p.m. on the 29th of April, 1992. The police began harassing all the young men at the corner. They began to beat up one young man and his mother, and many neighbors ran over to try to stop the beating.

The police then arrested three of the men including my older son Damian. After this horrible experience everyone in the neighborhood was running around crying and saying, "They beat Rodney King and got off and now they're over here doing the same thing."

This is what sparked Florence and Normandie, the injustice of it all, including the murder of Latasha Harlins. The justice system has no justice in it. The whole community, both Black and Latin, were just fed up with this system. It still is. It's time for the community to work together to change this world.

—Georgianna Williams, Co-founder, LA4+ Defense Committee

Editorial

The West's studied disregard for Bosnia

The collective response by the U.S., the UN and NATO toward the murderous Serbian siege of Gorazde over the past month has once again shown that the only "principle" governing their response to events in Bosnia is the effort to maintain the "credibility" of the Western alliance. The actual struggles and sufferings of the Bosnian people count for little or nothing in their eyes.

Indeed, despite the threats of military intervention and talk of a negotiated settlement, recent events confirm that the Western powers long ago resigned themselves to a Serbian victory in Bosnia.

U.S. GREEN LIGHT TO SERB AGGRESSION

That sentiment was openly voiced in early April, when Secretary of Defense William Perry stated that the U.S. would not prevent the Serbs from overrunning Gorazde. As if on cue, the Serbian forces intensified their murderous attacks on the city, as part of their effort to "cleanse" Eastern Bosnia of its remaining Muslims.

In an effort to calm the embarrassment caused by so brazenly giving the green light to Serbian-induced genocide, Clinton soon afterward ordered a limited NATO air strike on Serbian positions. When the Serbs responded by intensifying their attack on Gorazde, Clinton found himself having to answer why "the world's most powerful alliance" could not stop Serbia. If the Serbs could so thumb their noses at U.S. military might, many asked, what would prevent more serious adversaries elsewhere from doing so? The very credibility of the Western alliance was called into question.

In response, Clinton got the European powers and Russia to threaten a massive aerial attack on Serbian positions unless their forces withdrew from Gorazde. He also called for Gorazde, as well as the besieged towns of

Srebrenica, Tuzla, Zupa and Bihac, to come under the same UN pledge of "protection" that Sarajevo received back in February. The Serbs have gone along with the plan for now and withdrawn from Gorazde, though they continue to attack areas like Brcko and Maglaj.

Yet the U.S./UN plan to extend the Sarajevo "solution" to cities such as Gorazde hardly poses a serious challenge to the Serbs. Serbian forces still surround these cities, preventing movement in and out of them. The UN insists that the Bosnians must not attack the Serbian positions; if they do, the UN will consider them "aggressors." The present situation thus brings us back full circle to what the West proposed a year ago: the UN will "protect" some "safe havens" in which the Muslim victims of "ethnic cleansing" will be ghettoized, thus allowing the Serbs to secure their basic war aim—the destruction of Bosnia's multi-ethnic heritage.

A statement of one resident of Sarajevo (recently quoted by Bosnian journalist Zlatko Dizdarevic) exposed the nature of these "safe havens": "I don't know myself what to do with all this 'freedom.' I've been liberated from my job, I'm liberated from food and drink, I'm liberated from traveling, I've even been liberated from the hope that things will ever change."

'CREDIBILITY' OF WESTERN ALLIANCE

The truth is that throughout this crisis the Western powers have acceded to the fundamental aim of the Serbs. After slapping an arms embargo on the Bosnians and ignoring the cries of the victims of genocide, they turned their attention to Bosnia only after events there called into question the credibility of the Western alliance. Yet even after his recent threat to use military force, Clinton insisted his aim is not to roll back the

gains made by Serbian aggression.

The West's attitude was summed up by the UN commander in Bosnia, Michael Rose, who criticized the Bosnian government for "exaggerating" the extent of the Serb attacks on Gorazde. In May the UN took the unconscionable step of providing safe passage through Sarajevo to Serbian tanks en-route to another war front.

That the U.S. and other state powers do not see their role as stopping Serbian genocide should come as no surprise. The U.S. waged a vicious war against Iraq, but allowed Saddam Hussein to exterminate tens of thousands of Marsh Arabs. It invaded Panama to get rid of Noriega, but it has done nothing to aid the Haitian masses. Whether it be the period of World War II or today, capitalist states never act out of deference to the victims of genocide. To expect otherwise of them now is sheer illusion.

Yet it is a surprise that opponents of capitalism from the Left have been so silent and inactive on the issue of Bosnia. This has allowed the right wing to set the ground of discussion on Bosnia, with war-hawks like Jean Kirkpatrick and George Shultz calling for U.S. military intervention. These architects of genocidal policies in El Salvador, East Timor and elsewhere may feign interest in Bosnia, but their real agenda is the reassertion of U.S. imperial might overseas.

In opposing U.S. policy on this issue, we long ago called for lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia. But we did not limit ourselves to that. We also called for the development of independent grassroots initiatives to aid the Bosnian people and the creation of a dialogue on ideas of freedom that could help break through the "mind-forged manacles" which have led so many to remain silent on this issue. This has become only more important today.

May 2, 1994

What next for South Africa as Mandela, ANC come to 'power'?

(Continued from page 1)

time ANC's nationalist rival Pan-African Congress (PAC).

The 400 seat Constituent Assembly was elected on the national level, while regional provinces were elected on a separate ballot. The separate provincial ballot was a concession the ANC made to the far right in a bid to get them to participate in the elections. At the local level, the interim constitution reserves 30% of local council seats for existing white authority, while a Feb. 22 amendment to the constitution (endorsing the principle of "self-determination" for whites that provides them a statutory volkstaatsraad or homeland council) allows the far right to pursue a volkstaat after the election.

Several such concessions were made to Buthelezi's IFP, along with assuring the KwaZulu bureaucracy that it would remain intact after the election. From ANC concessions and assurances made before the election, we know then that 1) the far-right Freedom Front will have a cabinet seat, with possibly 20 seats in the Assembly and autonomous volkstaatsraads in right-wing strongholds like Transvaal and the Orange Free State; 2) Mandela has assured the IFP a senior seat in the Cabinet, and it can expect autonomous status in Natal Province, with more than 20 seats in the Assembly; and 3) most importantly, de Klerk's NP will probably hold Cabinet portfolios for the all-important finance, agriculture, mining and security ministries.

SA'S RESTRUCTURED ECONOMY

Though these factors will play a significant role in the future development of post-election SA, they do not constitute its major contradictions. To comprehend these there are three primary areas we need to examine: 1) the restructuring of the South African economy now underway; 2) the present state and disposition of those social forces that made up the "mass democratic movement" over the last two decades; and 3) the current disorientation of the Left.

Judge Johann Kriegler, the head of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), mused enthusiastically on the eve of the election that SA stood on the verge of finally realizing its historic mission of being the "economic engine-house of Africa." Fantastic as it sounds coming from the mouth of a white Afrikaner, the notion of a liberated South Africa becoming the economic engine of independent Africa had long been a unifying force within the continent-wide movement for African unity. That the Afrikaner elite now see it as its mission intimates not only how changed the world really is, but reveals in no uncertain terms exactly who will control the commanding heights of the economy, both state and private.

What Mandela described to a group of businessmen in western Transvaal earlier in the year, namely, that the economy is in a mess, with no economic growth since 1991, with foreign investments constantly declining, with some 18 million people living below the poverty line, and 48% unemployed, is probably what prompts the ANC to entertain the neoliberal illusion that SA's economy can be "democratized." No doubt that is what led Tokyo Sexwale, chairman of the ANC's most powerful Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging (PWV) region, to make the fantastic assertion that "The struggle has been to liberate the market!"

FROM RESISTANCE TO 'RECONSTRUCTION'

The last four years of restructuring have produced two contradictory phenomena within SA's Black labor force. First, a new high and permanent stage of unemployment has exacerbated the already wrenching social dislocations within the Black townships. In the steel and engi-

neering industry alone the number of jobs have fallen from 450,000 to the current low of 180,000 in the last decade.

The second consequence of the restructuring of the SA economy is the new bureaucratization of significant sectors of organized labor, especially key trade union affiliates of COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions), which has 1.2 million members. It is this crucial sector of the economy which has economic analysts and ANC planners blissful about SA's future prospects. As one such enthusiast extolled, the prospects of SA's economic recovery can be measured by its "booming stock exchange, and a 4.5% increase in gross domestic fixed investment," as well as a drop in corporate taxes and a fall in real wages and real interest rates.

The new economic structural reality finds SA's trade union movement, both COSATU and NACTU (National Council of Trade Union [with 335,000 members]), in the midst of a historic and strategic shift "from resistance to economic reconstruction." This shift to so-called "strategic unionism" is supposed to signify that "unions, like managements, make production an imperative, on the understanding that improved economic viability is better for their membership. But this takes the unions into areas of decision-making which would pit them against the short-term needs of their members, in the belief (it is not a certainty) that they are implementing strategies with long-term benefits" (Southern Africa Report, April 8, 1994, p. 8).

The new tripartite structure of labor, capital and the state has made shopfloor leadership uneasy about COSATU's "concurrence with the ANC on the need to achieve 'macro-economic balance.' It fears that workers in the new SA will find their wage and work condition demands stymied on the grounds that they are upsetting macro-economic balances" (p. 8). As two COSATU left dissidents explained, regarding the ANC/COSATU "Reconstruction and Development Program" (RDP): "The political arithmetic, when it comes to paying for the RDP, is clear.

"Wage restraints + strict monetary policies + eternal co-operative partnership between capital and labor + achieve higher levels of profitability + government expenditure within existing constraints = the workers will pay" (SA Labour Bulletin, September-October, 1993, p. 86).

The greatest organizational problem stemming from the new economic restructuring is that the trend toward "strategic unionism" centralized bargaining and the provisions of the RDP restricting workers' right to strike for the sole purpose of collective bargaining have opened up a gap between union leadership and the rank-and-file. Should that gap continue to widen (and there's no reason to assume that it won't), then Mandela's advice to a COSATU Congress back in September may become a self-fulfilling prophecy: "How many times has a labor movement supported a liberation movement, only to find itself betrayed on the day of liberation? There are many examples of this in Africa. If the ANC government does not deliver the goods you must do to it what you did to the apartheid regime" (SA Labour Bulletin, p. 19).

WHERE IS THE LEFT?

Black youth are the one social force in SA sure to act on Mandela's advice. The mass unemployment, the education crisis, the social violence which is incredibly more pervasive than the political violence on which the media is so fixated, and the mass disillusionment over the direction in which the ANC has taken the liberation movement have all contributed to the creation of a so-called "lost" generation of Black youth.

Face-to-face with this new tripartite reality of social dislocation, economic restructuring and Black political state power, where finally is the Left to be found? Despite the questions raised by such independent socialist thinkers as Colin Bundy and Neville Alexander about the role of the Left in the wake of the collapse of what Bundy calls "actually-existing Stalinism," the single crucial question that pertains to the contradictory character of SA's "mass democratic struggle" of the last four years seems to have been avoided.

More than any other arena of social struggle of the last 20 years, SA has disclosed the problematic of the "dialectics of organization and philosophy" for the revolutionary movement. For nowhere has mass creativity in organizing civil society along revolutionary democratic lines been so extensive; nowhere have the social forces held power in their hands through making civil society "ungovernable" and building new social and political structures; nowhere have the masses more fully embodied the Marxist-Humanist idea of "masses as reason" both by the new society they sought at the same time as they searched for a philosophy of revolution through Steve Biko's theory of Black Consciousness.

And yet...the retreat to the ANC's politics of "negotiated settlement," it must be admitted, was more a result than the cause of the fact that the masses were not so much taken over by the political party they looked to be taken over by it. Now, the ANC has state power and Marxist intellectuals like Neville Alexander continue to labor under the false notion that somehow "the more radical the democratic project can be within the limits of capitalism...the better for us, the better for the nation-building and the socialist project. Because when we have a strong civil society where the working class gains hegemony, then clearly the very practices that came into being will eventually impact even on the policies of the capitalist state" (Work In Progress, November 1993, p. 17).

What Alexander wishes to ignore is that over the last two decades of mass struggle in every sector of society, the masses have created "radical democracy" on the ground. Moreover, so-called "working class hegemony" has shown a steady, if at times difficult, growth to the point where the Black working class now stands, more than any other force, as the human factor in determining the course of development of the new SA.

One wonders then just what further "hegemony" Alexander expects the working class to gain before he judges it ready to go beyond transitional democracy to the revolutionary uprooting of the "economic remains" of apartheid state-capitalism.

The crisis of the Left is the most telling sign that there is a philosophic void at the center of the movement and in its leadership circles, in and out of power. Which is why it is fitting at this historic moment to recall what Frantz Fanon lamented at the beginning of the African revolutions against white domination:

"Colonialism and its derivatives do not, as a matter of fact, constitute the present enemies of Africa... For my part, the deeper I enter into the cultures and the political circles the surer I am that the great danger that threatens Africa is the absence of ideology" (Toward the African Revolution, p. 186).

In the coming period we will examine other dimensions of the new South Africa, hear the voices from the new stage of struggle about to unfold, and intervene in the new battle of ideas which is sure to emerge around the "dialectics of organization and philosophy."

May 5, 1994

'Every worker an organizer' on UFW march

Sacramento, Cal.—The United Farm Workers (UFW) of California's 24-day, 330-mile march from Delano to Sacramento ended on April 24 with a rally at the State Capitol. Over 1,500 farmworkers and supporters started the trek, in commemoration of Cesar Chavez's death one year ago, and 10,000 finished it. Many more participated in the event, as thousands marched for a day or a few hours along the route, and every evening there were festivities in the towns where the marchers spent the night. Those events were some of the most important, as more than 10,000 union authorization cards were turned in as a result of the fraternizing with local farmworkers.

I was with the marchers as they arrived in south Sacramento two days before the big rally. Despite the fact that 19½ miles were covered that day the rally at Maple

Elementary School was very animated. Cesar Chavez's brother Ricardo spoke, as did Sacramento's first Chicano mayor, Joe Serna. A prayer that Chavez penned was read and emphasis was placed throughout the march on the need to get back to Chavez's idea of what the union meant. This is why the UFW, headed now by Arturo Rodriguez, created a theme for the march: "Every worker an organizer."

At the rally that evening many Blacks were there, along with Latinos/as of every age. You know something is going on when you see women and men in their 70s who have worked all their lives in the Central Valley walking over ten miles a day with smiles on their faces! Whole families participated. You could see who "farmworkers" are, both historically and today; they're not just one ethnicity nor just from one country—certainly not just men! Due to media portrayals many people don't know that the historic grape strike that started in 1965



News & Letters photo

Participants in the historic UFW march from Delano to Sacramento, California.

was begun by Filipino/a workers who came to the National Farm Workers Association (precursor to the UFW) to get their support.

One woman who has worked in the fields for years told me, "We usually get water to drink now when we're out in the 100-degree heat, and sometimes there are portable toilets, things it took much struggle to win. But that isn't good enough, it's not freedom." The angriest discussions were about Governor Wilson, who is trying to get re-elected on the current wave of anti-immigrant racist sentiment in California. "Chavez si, Wilson no!" was the chant of choice throughout the month-long march.

—Mitch Weerth

Flag of shared misery

Dominican Republic—After 150 years of misery, Dominican national chauvinists emerge who raise a recycled national flag against the defenseless Haitian people, against our suffering brothers.

On Feb. 27, 1844 was born, so they say, the most solid "national independence," and today it commemorates and celebrates its 150 years. Upon the majority of the houses, one could see a flag. We have seen millions of flags; we have seen people rushing to be the first to place the flag in front of their houses; and we have seen many Dominicans denigrate Haitians who reside in this country. We have seen a religious nationalism and a nationalist religiosity; millions of recycled flags whose emblem preaches "God, Fatherland and Liberty."

This new modality of Dominican religion, so-called "nationalism," produces flags in industrial quantities made of cloth, plastic or paper; recycled flags of all types, that is, all types of garbage transformed into "public utility." But this industry, this garbage factory, does not stop here. The different Dominican governments since 1844 have promoted a Dominican nationalism that is not anti-Spanish, nor anti-French, nor anti-U.S. government—but specifically anti-Haitian, taking as scapegoats those who have defended with blood and tears the liberty of that heroic homeland.

It seems that these nationalist snipers are conscious that the perpetuity of a Dominican-Haitian border results in a major guarantee for their interests, because in the last 150 years of "border," the Dominican and Haitian governments have been nothing more than appendages of the U.S. and France.

Therefore, while the strategists of "nationalism," Haitian and Dominican, go around in the same jet and are of the same emblem, the sadly oppressed population of our humiliated homelands raises two pieces of flags; two pieces of misery that in the end are nothing more than 150 years of shared misery. As the saying goes, "Divide and Conquer."

—Monchy

Review: Latin America and the fall of Communism

Utopia Unarmed: The Latin American Left After the Cold War by Jorge G. Castaneda (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 498 pages.

The rebellion in Chiapas was a warning from deep within the bowels of Mexico. Directly shaking the Salinas regime, Chiapas' tremors could be felt north of the Rio Grande and south of the Isthmus of Panama. It has rekindled discussion of ideas of social equality and liberation, speaking to the Left in Mexico and Latin America at a time when many are questioning the very idea of a revolution in our future.

It is this Left that is the subject of Jorge Castaneda's *Utopia Unarmed: The Latin American Left After the Cold War*. With the important exception of Cuba, the collapse of Communism has had little material impact upon Latin America. However, the ideological impact has been immense, particularly upon the Left.

THE HISTORY OF THE LEFT

Before examining that impact, Castaneda traces the recent history of the Left in several chapters that include "The Cuban Crucible" on the revolution and its influence in Latin America, "The Second Coming" on the revolutionary movements in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua, as well as the guerrilla group M-19 in Colombia and the terrorism of Shining Path in Peru, and "Squaring the Circle: Reforming Revolution" on reformism in Latin America.

The main difficulty with these chapters is that with a brevity of presentation comes a superficiality of analysis. One gets a series of stories, often of revolutionary personalities in different countries, and while sometimes entertaining, it is unclear how much one has learned about the various Left movements, their limitations and failures.

From here Castaneda examines both Latin American intellectuals and "The Grass Roots Explosion." The range of movements—from Christian base communities in Brazil to shantytown organizing in Lima, Peru to women's movements in a number of countries—speaks to how activities and ideas of social liberation are so indigenous to Latin America today.

THE 'SENSE OF DEFEAT'

The end of the Cold War has ended neither the desperate conditions of poverty and inequality that characterize vast areas of Latin America, nor the quest on the

part of millions for different conditions of life and labor. It is when Castaneda takes up "The Latin American Left and the Fall of Communism" that he is most illuminating:

"...The most damaging effect of the Cold War's conclusion on the Latin American Left lies in the generalized perception of defeat...This sense of defeat is derived from the Left's perceived or real connection with existing socialism...the idea of revolution itself, central to Latin American radical thought for decades, has lost its meaning...But the idea of revolution has withered and virtually died because its outcome has become either unwanted or unimaginable...Under these new conditions, revolutionaries can hardly survive. But without revolutionaries, the vision of revolution vanishes or is condemned to endure only under extreme circumstances...People do not die, go to prison, resist torture or devote years of their lives to fighting for something that cannot be visualized or thought of in concrete terms, something that is not definitive. This hypothetical end of revolution does not imply an end to history, but what could be called the end of a certain idea of history, of the future...The only thing left to fight for is a future that is simply the present, plus more of the same."

Castaneda has here caught the grave contradiction of the Left not only in Latin America but globally. The collapse of Communism has freed us from having so-called Marxism practiced by those state-capitalist ideological policemen calling themselves Communists, who had all the weapons of totalitarian state power in their hands. How are we on the Left to forge a new vision of the future rooted in the idea of freedom as Marx expressed it?

Castaneda does not help us here, for though he perceptively sees the quandary of a Latin American Left without a vision of the future, he devotes the rest of his book to working out his solution sans the kind of theoretical/philosophical probing needed. Rather, he chooses to explore the possibility of a truncated future for Latin America, one based on reformulating nationalism, rethinking democracy and a redistribution of wealth. Questions worth exploring, but Castaneda chooses to do so all within the confines of the existing system. Is this not an illusory veil upon "a future that is simply the present, plus more of the same?"

—Eugene Walker

Mothers of Plaza de Mayo

New York—On April 11, the Madres de Plaza de Mayo came here for the first time from Argentina to speak, invited by the Women's Studies Program of Hunter College. Every Thursday for the past 17 years these women have marched around the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires in front of the Presidential Palace, demanding that the Argentinian state (dictatorships or "democracies") stop denying their responsibility in the disappearance of over 30,000 people who didn't think the way the system wanted and wants. They are demanding not only justice, an explanation for what happened to their children and for this not to happen ever again, but also fighting for a new human society.

In the talk of Mercedes and Juanita, the two Mothers representing the movement, their philosophy and their incredible experiences were evident. They showed a strength that no party of today's "Left" can approach, especially in the Mothers' belief that any struggle for real change has to come always from below. For that reason, for the Mothers, political parties cannot make any real change. Real change cannot come from within this system. "That which has no base falls," one of the Mothers said. Their struggle, the constant risking of their lives for a new beginning "where workers don't have to work anymore as they do today," blossoms with happiness for they are free. Nobody and nothing can stop them.

The Mothers just came from organizing an encounter in Paris with Mothers' organizations from all over the world, none of them affiliated with any political party. Among others, Mothers of "street kids" assassinated by paramilitary forces in Brazil and Mothers of conscientious objectors from Iraq, Spain, Israel and Serbia against obligatory military service wrote a document committing themselves to fight the inhuman capitalist system which they already see falling.

After their presentation, Mercedes told us that until her daughter disappeared she knew nothing. Her 31-year-old revolutionary daughter gave "birth" to her courage in thought and passion. Their disappeared daughters and sons gave the Mothers "life," they were reborn, left their tears aside and took to the streets in the struggle for total liberation, for and with everyone.

There is no doubt that it has been years since such powerful voices were heard in this city where today, to be poor, especially a young Black or Latina/o, is to be a criminal: abused, prosecuted, imperiled and tortured by the repressive apparatus of the capitalist state. We hear Mercedes and Juanita's voices constantly resounding in our hearts. We think of the Zapatistas, of the Black and Latino youth rebelling in Los Angeles—the ceaseless self-movement of becoming.

To write to the Mothers: Asociacion Madres de Plaza de Mayo, Hipolito Yrigoyen 1442, (1089) Buenos Aires, Argentina.

—Marxist-Humanist Latinas/os in New York City

The maids of Ecuador

On a recent trip home to Ecuador, I was struck by how much the gulf between middle-class and poor people has grown. Only middle-class men and women have access to decent jobs, and they "need" two incomes in the family to satisfy their desire for luxury goods. Their life styles are made possible by having live-in maids.

The maid performs all the work involved in keeping the family functioning, no matter how many members of the family there are. She works until the work is done, often 18 hours a day. She gets up before the family, works all day and cleans up after their dinner. She probably ate her dinner standing up in the kitchen. Then she is supposed to feel like part of the family if she is allowed to watch television with them at night, but she will do the ironing while she watches. If she is babysitting she may not even have her hours of sleep to herself.

The average wage for a maid is \$30 a month. Out of this she can rent a room with a dirt floor and no bathroom (usually there is one bathroom that never works serving many families) for \$15. If she buys a quart of milk and a loaf of bread it will cost \$1 a day.

In order to hold her job, a live-in maid has to abandon her children with relatives in the countryside. This leads to child abuse. A live-in maid often gets off only a half-day a week, and she may spend that traveling four hours each way to see her children, arriving back at her employer's on Monday morning without having slept.

There are probably 20,000 maids—a tenth of the population—in my city alone, yet they have no organization.

—Ecuadoran woman

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Students battle racism

...of the Fordice case

Jackson, Miss.—More than 15,000 Black Americans, mostly students, turned out to express our feelings about the Ayers vs. Fordice case in Jackson on Saturday, April 30. The march from Jackson State University to the capitol three miles away was organized to show our support for HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) which are being threatened by the Ayers vs. Fordice case (Fordice is the Governor of Mississippi).

The march and rally at the capitol really had a diverse group of students from all over the country. There were students from Howard, Spelman and Morehouse, Alcorn Valley, Alabama State, Pine Bluff, just to name a few.

We met at 10 a.m. at Jackson State and marched from there at noon to the capitol to hear a number of speakers: students, faculty, legislators, and NAACP director Ben Chavis, who was our keynote speaker.

Student speakers from Alcorn Valley and Jackson State expressed their feelings about the Ayers vs. Fordice case. They noted that our generation needed to assume leadership for the challenges we face today. They also made the point that we as a people need to progress further with our education by expanding not retarding the role of the HBCUs, and through equity in funding for them. If Governor Fordice wins the Ayers case, it would mean that HBCUs would either be closed down or would have to merge with historically white schools.

As a native of Jackson, I agree that it would really hurt us if we lose the Ayers case, because so many Black Americans fought and died to have the right to an education. Closing and merging HBCUs won't help us or education in this country. Our universities are just as good as historically white schools.

We have already begun to meet to take up further goals of our struggle and to plan further actions. We will definitely be present in full force at the trial in Oxford, Miss. when it begins on May 9.

—Woman, Jackson State

...of the klan

Indianapolis—The Ku Klux Klan has been increasingly active in the Midwest rallying on the steps of government buildings. Their small rallies are always opposed by crowds many times their size, but it is no less scary to see fascists in uniform coming through the doors of government buildings with Nazi salutes.

Once again on April 2 at the Indiana state capital, the police were present in great force, protecting the Klan's rally against anti-racist demonstrators. There were more than a hundred Black and white anti-Klan protesters; our ages ranged from high school students on up.

As we arrived, 10 to 15 police cars pulled up with four cops in riot gear in each car. Around the corner, cops were deployed all over the ground as well as on walls and towers of another government building with binoculars, cameras, and note pads. A group of interested passers-by, on their way home from a Greyhound bus station, were asked to show ID's, were thoroughly interrogated and had their bags searched. We went through checkpoints into an area enclosed completely by heavily armed police—who were there to keep tabs on us!

We must show our strong opposition to the rise of fascism and to these demonstrations that symbolize the coupling of Klan and state violence. The KKK and Nazis do not just speak racial hatred; white supremacist attacks continue in the same old brutal tradition throughout the country. Upcoming Klan rallies include: May 7—Illinois State House in Springfield; and June 11—Rockford, Ill. We must not allow the Klan to rally unopposed.

—Univ. of Illinois student

City hall sleep-in

San Francisco—Homeless activists and homeless people slept on the steps of San Francisco's City Hall in early April to protest Mayor Frank Jordan's Matrix program. Matrix criminalizes homelessness by imposing \$76 fines and jail sentences for such "crimes" as sleeping or eating in public, and panhandling.

The protest, organized by the Coalition on Homelessness and a network of religious organizations, drew about 300 for a rally followed by a march through the Civic Center Plaza, an area where the crackdown has been particularly intense. Over half the demonstrators stayed to sleep on the steps.

One man, who held a sign reading "End Matrix Now—Save Human Lives!" said, "Jordan came into office saying he would do something about the homeless problem. His solution was to make our very existence illegal. If all these people that got homes knew how easy it was to lose them, then they'd do something about Matrix. But the middle class just thinks 'it can't happen to me.' What they don't know is that if we let Jordan get away with this discrimination, it can happen, and it will to some."

—Lynn Halley

...on the campus

Chicago—A rally against racism at Loyola University called by the Students Organized Against Racism (SOAR) came after a series of incidents including "White Pride" stickers being put on the dorm room doors of Black students, the Black Cultural Center receiving bomb threats, a biology professor who is active in the anti-racism movement receiving hate mail, and fliers of progressive groups being defaced with racist slogans.

SOAR has researched discrimination at Loyola by the university itself. The university does not keep accurate minority retention records, so SOAR could not find the true extent of the problem. They did, however, find the "adjustment of the affirmative action policy" to be of some consequence. Ten years ago the African-American enrollment at Loyola was 10%, four years ago it dropped to 7% and it is now down to 4%.

When SOAR inquired into the extent of minority faculty employment, they couldn't get any figures. Loyola keeps its bigotry well hidden. A senior said that in his four years here, he had seen a total of two African-American teachers between all of Loyola's campuses.

While Loyola may have a good academic reputation, its reputation for equality and encouraging cultural diversity is a facade.

—Loyola student

Stop Hydro-Quebec!



News & Letters photo

Protests in downtown Chicago, above, and around the world April 14 denounced the two-decade-long project to flood and despoil Cree and Inuit lands. Vast tracts have already been flooded by Hydro-Quebec, a power utility owned by the provincial government of Quebec. Known as the James Bay project, the system of dams and dikes, though sited in Canada, will provide energy for export to the U.S. and possibly Mexico as well as for domestic use.

Direct Instruction: boot camp for the mind

I work at a public elementary school in one of Chicago's most desolated South Side Black neighborhoods, but it wasn't until I received training in the Direct Instruction (DI) method of teaching that I realized how totally the little rhyme some schools have kids recite every morning defines the vision of the school: "I only got a minute/ Only 60 seconds in it/ I didn't choose it/ Can't refuse it/ But it's up to me to use it! Do it now! Do it now! Do it now!" DI is a behaviorist method of teaching reading, writing and math designed to bring remedial students up to grade level on standardized tests.

At my school, teachers, most of whom are Black women, objected to DI because they were offended by the demand that they literally recite 40-minute-long lessons word for word out of a script. The president of the Local School Council, a Black lawyer, responded by saying that he knew that teachers "couldn't walk and chew gum at the same time" and DI would force them to teach the students to read. The principal told anyone who didn't like it to start job hunting.

"CORRECT ALL MISTAKES," say "consultants" from the company that publishes the books. They say, "It is our job to teach these children to speak properly because people will not give them jobs because they can't speak properly." They stress that we have to correct students if they drop the consonant sounds off the end of the words like the "g" in "fishing" and not to allow students to use the double negative.

For vocabulary the teacher walks around the room reading the script and banging on desks with a ruler as a signal. The teacher reads: "Effort. Effort is another word for 'strength.' What would be another way to say, 'It doesn't take much strength to move that table?'" Bang! The students respond, "It doesn't take much effort to move that table." If someone says, "It doesn't take a lot of effort to move that table," that is incorrect, so everyone starts over. The goal is absolute uniformity.

When the students finally begin reading, each student can read two or three sentences with interruptions from the teacher asking scripted questions. Student: "The cat sat on the window sill." Teacher: "Everyone, where did the cat sit?" Bang! "On the window sill."

The students are expected to perform this regimen for three or four subjects a day every day from first grade until eighth grade. A complex system awards points to students who conform to the routine. Teachers are instructed to reinforce "on-task" behavior and ignore "off-task" behavior. "Oh, Kiesha did a great job of opening her book and finding Part A!" Teachers are constantly reminded to keep the pace moving because the lessons are so boring that the students will fool around if they

French youth revolt

In the aftermath of the mass student protests in March against a lowered minimum wage for youth, new issues and problems have come to the fore. One of these was the case of two Algerian immigrant youth, Abdel Hakim Youbi and Mouloud Madaci, who were arrested during the large demonstrations in Lyon on March 21. Three days later, without even a hearing, the rightist government deported them to Algeria on the grounds that they were not French citizens. These types of horrors are now allowed under France's new draconian "zero immigration" laws.

Although they had denied all along that their movement was leftist or even political, the French students of 1994 rose to meet the challenge hurled down by a racist government. On March 25, hundreds of mainly high school [lycee] youths crowded the corridors of the courthouse in Lyon, successfully pressuring that court to reverse the deportations. However, the government indicated that it would not obey the local court's decision.

In Lyon, leftist students took the floor at a general assembly and called for continued demonstrations "to denounce police violence, to demand the return of the two deportees and the release of all those arrested." Everywhere, it seemed, the case of "Mouloud and Abdel" had become a rallying point in the continuing demonstrations against the lowered minimum wage. The message got through to a nervous government, and within a week or so, Mouloud and Abdel were readmitted to France. However, they now face trial along with their comrades from the March 21 demonstration and are thus not entirely out of danger.

How was this "apolitical" youth movement able so easily to broaden its focus beyond the single issue that all had seemed to insist was its sole focus? Part of the answer is that French students today include more people of color, plus this student movement was rooted more in high schools and technical institutes in working-class and immigrant areas than in universities.

Another factor may spring from the very nature of youth movements in contemporary society. Whether in the massive revolts of the 1960s or the smaller ones in the retrogressionist 1980s, youth movements have again and again shown a capacity to move quickly beyond immediate, particular issues to more global and universalistic ones.

The well-known sociologist Alain Touraine caught some of this when he published an article in the midst of the demonstrations on the need for French intellectuals to come to terms with the crisis of today's youth, where a whole generation faces mass unemployment. He argued that radical intellectuals should be addressing these issues, but complained they had not yet "awakened from their long post-structuralist slumber" (Le Monde 3/30/94).

—Kevin A. Barry

are not rushed. In math do not wait for the slower half of the class to solve the problem before moving on.

One teacher told me that the social studies curriculum includes the impact of the Civil Rights Movement and the women's movement on society, but she never has a chance to get to it because the administration avidly monitors how many DI lessons she completes each week. According to the all-knowing standardized test, the majority of the students in her class were at grade level or above, yet the whole program assumes the poor Black children are remedial students by definition.

DI's proponents see it as a panacea which will save a fraction of the coming generation of the "underclass" from joblessness by transforming them into bourgeois individuals who "speak properly" and receive high enough test scores to be admitted to college. (Never mind that college enrollment for minorities has been declining steadily over the past 14 years due to rising tuition costs.)

Far from preparing a future generation of Black entrepreneurs, to me DI is actually a reappearance of the old accommodationism of Booker T. Washington's "Negro Education," or "Industrial Education," that aimed to create a docile work force. This old attitude, however, has been reformulated for our age of high-tech production, massive unemployment, and retrogression in thought.

SINCE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, education for working-class children has been modeled after the discipline of the capitalist production line. In our period of massive unemployment the demand is for a docile unemployed work force. Factory discipline in education has not disappeared with the factories. The mental regimentation is becoming more total than ever.

DI is a boot camp for the mind where conformity and industriousness alone are rewarded. "Good" youth get the one right answer. The petty rewards for cooperating with the mental regimen are always handed out in the shadow of the youth correctional center. In the capitalist U.S. neither the "good" youth nor the "bad" can enjoy the freedom of self-development.

DI's opponents fear that we are training a generation of robots. If DI actually can increase an individual's scores on a standardized test, that only shows how inhuman the concept of a standardized test is. No behaviorist method of teaching, however, can have so total an impact on the human mind; most thirteen-year-olds who have been through DI can tell you as much. When youth ridicule this system, they challenge the notion that their minds are objects for adult society to manipulate.

—Disgusted Teacher

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The horrific massacres by the Rwandan army and vigilante groups have reached genocidal proportions, claiming more than 200,000 lives in April. Almost all of the victims were civilians, many of them children or people cowering in refugee centers. The perpetrators tended to be members of the majority Hutu ethnic group, often spurred on by rightist and militarist parties, while the victims were usually from either the minority Tutsi group or from other Hutu groups favoring compromise with the Tutsi. Why are such horrors taking place now in this tiny Central African land?

By the tone of its coverage, the white-dominated media implied that there was some sort of inherent African "savagery" at work. A fitting response to such idiocies was given by a French newspaper whose cartoon showed a Rwandan soldier telling a white TV reporter: "I believe that in the developed countries you call this 'ethnic cleansing'" (*Le Monde*, April 9, 1994).

The immediate incident precipitating the massacres was the mysterious April 6 murders, as their plane was shot down, of Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira, both of whom were Hutu.

In the pre-colonial and colonial eras, the Tutsi minority (about 15% of the population of the area) ruled over the Hutu majority in a brutal fashion in Rwanda and Burundi. German colonialists deepened this class and ethnic division by requiring the population to carry identity cards listing whether they were Tutsi or Hutu. These ID cards were maintained by the later Belgian colonial rulers and by the post-independence regimes.

In 1959, as independence neared and as the Belgians began to lean more toward the Hutu majority, a Hutu

Haiti's plight

In recent days, Haiti's exiled leftist President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who won a landslide victory in 1990 with 67% of the vote in an 11-candidate field, has begun to speak out publicly against U.S. betrayals of the Haitian people. He has announced plans to rescind Haitian government support for the U.S. policy of using the Coast Guard to send back Haitian refugees rather than allowing them to apply for political asylum here. He has also termed Clinton's overall policy of compromise with the military who overthrew him as "racist."

All of this is part of changes on the ground in both Haiti and the U.S. In Haiti, the regime has stepped up its brutal repression. On April 25, soldiers massacred 23 fishermen in a pro-Aristide neighborhood in Gonaives, a town which has long been a center of grassroots revolutionary movements. This latest outrage brings the death toll to nearly 3,000 since the 1991 military coup.

Haitian peasant organizations have also begun openly to denounce Clinton's compromises. Peasant activist Chavannes Jean-Baptiste rejected even the term "ambiguous" to describe Clinton's policies: "His position is very clear. It's consistent with a policy that does not want the restoration of democracy."

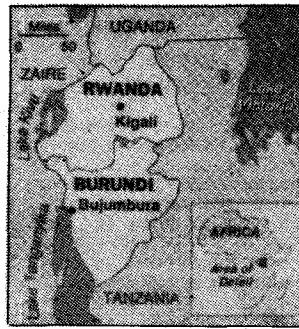
In the U.S., the Black community is also beginning to move. In April several prominent Black activists including Randall Robinson of TransAfrica and liberal politicians had themselves arrested in Washington to protest Clinton's policies.

Rwanda: the legacy of divide and rule

uprising dislodged Tutsi power in Rwanda. Massacres and expropriations of land caused thousands of members of the Tutsi aristocracy to flee to neighboring countries, and a series of Hutu-led governments then came to power after independence.

In Rwanda last year, the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front, armed by neighboring Uganda, seized a large swath of land in the North, prompting 700,000 Hutu refugees to flee southward into the capital, Kigali. In recent months, both Rwanda and Burundi have simmered with ethnic tension, yet at least in Rwanda, a compromise seemed to have been worked out.

President Habyarimana, in power for over two decades, agreed to share power with the Democratic Republican Movement, the latter an oppositional coalition including Hutu parties opposed to a narrow ethnic politics, an ethnically mixed party, and the Rwandan Patriotic Front. Habyarimana, who had for



Lessons of the Italian elections

On April 25, in the wake of the March elections which brought to power a rightist coalition including the neo-fascist party, hundreds of thousands of labor, leftist and women's liberation activists gathered all across Italy to commemorate the anniversary of the 1945 mass uprising against Mussolini which resulted in his death by hanging on April 28, 1945. In 1994 the biggest turnout, 200,000 people, was in Milan, the place where Mussolini was caught, tried and then faced revolutionary justice for his 23 years of murder, torture and militarism.

This year's commemoration was a challenge to the current state of Italian politics and society. For on March 27-28, Italian voters gave a landslide victory (44% of the vote) to the rightist so-called Freedom Pole, and only 35% to its main opponent, the leftist Progressive Pole. The neo-fascist National Alliance, part of the Freedom Pole, received its highest totals ever, over 12%, and is slated to obtain some posts in the new government.

The key player in the Freedom Pole is Silvio Berlusconi, whose Perot-like campaign against the "system" mushroomed from nothing to electoral victory in only three months. In January, Berlusconi was only the owner of a debt-ridden media empire controlling half of Italy's TV channels, but by March, he had saturated the media (especially those he owned) with carefully crafted demagogic appeals for "freedom" versus the Left, promises to create "one million new jobs" without ever saying how, etc. The third member of Freedom Pole was the subtly racist Northern League, which wants the more affluent North to secede from the rest of Italy.

How could this happen, a vote for a coalition which includes out-and-out fascists, whose leader praised Mussolini as a "great statesman" only days after the election? How can the world media run articles like "Italy's Neo-Fascists: Have They Shed Their Past" (*The New York Times* March 31, 1994), which deliberately obfuscate the issue by asking if the neo-fascists "have shed their anti-Semitism" when anti-socialist, anti-Marxist, anti-demo-

many years propped up his dictatorial rule via demagogic attacks on the remaining Tutsi minority, now incurred the wrath of Hutu ultras in the army and elsewhere.

Many now believe that it was Hutu ultras in the Rwandan army, outraged by Habyarimana's ethnic "compromises," who shot down the plane.

The responsibility for the 200,000 deaths in Rwanda and the even greater number massacred in Burundi in recent years needs to be laid at the door not of some type of "inherent" ethnic conflict, but at two types of historical developments: On the one hand, there were the divide and rule policies of Western colonialism, which, as in India, Ireland and elsewhere, deliberately fanned ethnic tensions to a fever pitch in order to maintain power.

On the other hand, the failure of the African independence movements of the 1960s to realize their universalizing, humanist, and revolutionary aspirations, paved the way for military men like Habyarimana to seize power, and then to hold power by appeals to the narrowest sort of ethnic chauvinism. It should also be pointed out that the modern arms used by the armies of both Rwanda and Burundi were brought in by outside powers seeking influence, the same powers who now stand back and watch the bloodshed as if they had nothing to do with it.

cratic and anti-labor positions were always the hallmarks of Mussolini's fascism far more than was anti-Semitism? How can it be forgotten that Mussolini popularized the word "totalitarian," an adjective he applied proudly to his regime?

Over the past year, the postwar structure of Italian politics crumbled as the Christian Democrats and the Socialist Party, the twin pillars of most post-1945 coalition governments, saw most of their key leaders face trial in a huge corruption scandal. Last fall, it appeared that the Left would benefit, but by March it was instead Berlusconi's coalition which was swept to power.

The defeat of the Left is not only an Italian defeat, for the Italian Left has over the past decade done just about everything that the dominant worldwide trends among left intellectuals and theoreticians have proposed. Whether in journals like *New Left Review*, or in the post-structuralist debate, or from among the followers of Habermas, one hears again and again almost like an incantation that the Left needs to cut its ties to labor, needs to embrace the market as well as "democracy and civil society," and above all, needs to renounce both revolution and all "utopian" visions of a society beyond capitalism.

This is precisely what the Italian Communist Party did when it changed its name to the Party of Democratic Socialism some years ago, and during the past year, when its leader, Ochetto, spent more time as head of the Progressive Pole working to calm the fears of bankers and businessmen than offering any solutions to the dilemmas facing the Italian masses.

Each time the Right attacked Marxism and socialism as "outdated" notions, the Left responded by saying we're not really that way any more, we're also a "normal" part of the capitalist order. In its failure to offer a real challenge to the ideas of the Right, in its failure to pose any vision of a liberated society, the Italian Left's losing campaign is symptomatic of the international Left's failure to come to grips with the post-1989 world. It will take far more than a single demonstration to break this impasse.

Mexico awakens

Indians, peasants, students and many others rallied in Mexico City on April 10 to mark the anniversary of the death of the revolutionary leader Emiliano Zapata, who was assassinated 75 years ago. The march began in Chiapas and proceeded nearly 500 miles to the capital.

The 50,000 people who participated focused on the struggles of the present: support for the goals of the Chiapas uprising and demands that the Salinas government revoke Article 27, which two years ago wiped out what was left of constitutionally guaranteed land reform dating back to the struggles of Zapata in the 1910 Mexican Revolution.

Two events are now happening in Chiapas. On the one hand, Indian peasants who for decades futilely petitioned to reclaim their land have been occupying it outright, in the thousands of acres, since the Jan. 1 Chiapas uprising. They have been confronted with a growing reaction by landowners who organize armed gangs to kidnap, torture and murder anyone they suspect to be a peasant leader or supporter.

On the other hand, the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) has suggested it will resume peace talks with the Salinas government. The EZLN had suspended contact with the government and discussion of government proposals in the Chiapas Indian communities after the March assassination of Luis Colosio, presidential candidate of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), fearing that Salinas would make the crisis into a pretext for launching a military repression in Chiapas.

Even though the government has said the assassination was not an organized conspiracy, the very fact that it happened has shown how much the PRI's unassailable rule for over six decades has come unglued. The genuine determinant in Mexico now is not going to be limited to the arena of electoral politics, but the ongoing events in Chiapas and the new spirit through Mexico the revolt has awakened.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding in 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the *Constitution of News and Letters Committees*.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Black, white and immigrant labor



by John Marcotte

"We don't need that kind here," A. hissed to me as he turned his back on the new casual dock worker. The new "kid" is Indian, from Guyana in South America. A. is white. I was stunned. I said, "What, are you serious?" A. said, "I've worked with them. They'll stab you in the back, kiss the boss's ass, sell you out."

I answered, "I cannot deny that you had a bad experience working with Indian people. I wasn't there, so I have to accept that as a fact. But that is the history of U.S. labor. The bosses have always tried to pit one against the other, to bring in immigrants to use against us."

"You don't stop that by turning your back on him. If you want him to be a strong union man and not a scab, you have to give him your hand, show him how we do the job here, tell him what his rights are. If you turn your back on him, you just push him to the boss. He has a rent to pay too, and you're not paying it for him."

RACE COLORS YOUR VIEW

We talked about this again the next day. A. said, "I'm not prejudiced. You got me wrong. But these guys are scabs, especially a guy wearing a (nonunion) courier T-shirt." I said, "You can't call a man a scab because at some point he had to work in a nonunion company." I told him that when I came new to this job, nobody, least of all the shop steward, ever told me what my rights were. As a result I killed myself for a whole year until I got on the list (a permanent job). I didn't know I had any rights as a casual.

A. just got on the list this year, and I remember how hard he worked as a casual. He worried a lot about whether they could fire him if he had a small accident. It was only after he got on the list that we saw the other side of him, the union side. You would think he'd remember that. But it's a funny thing how race colors your view.

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Black World

Rwanda, the West, and the rest of us



by Lou Turner

Once again UN policy has provided the political screen for African despotism to unleash its genocide on the African masses. Not unlike the tragic 1960 Congo crisis in which the despotic ambitions of such would-be African rulers as Zairean President Mobutu were carried out to their bloody ends behind the screen of UN intervention and CIA destabilization, Rwandan despotism has rent the screen of UN diplomacy to shreds now that it no longer serves its gluttonous appetite for blood.

Former Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana, whose death in a mysterious plane crash April 6 precipitated the current slaughter of a reported 500,000 Rwandans and the displacement of some 1 million refugees, played the UN card as well as any of Africa's despots seeking to frustrate even the most limited form of multiethnic democracy. Even as he went along with the UN-supervised power-sharing initiatives with the Tutsi-dominated Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), Habyarimana armed his party's extremist militia or *Interahamwe* ("Those Who Attack Together") to guarantee continued Hutu supremacy.

Not only have the *Interahamwe* and government army units targeted the Tutsi minority but also anyone from the Hutu majority perceived to be unsympathetic to the Hutu-dominated Habyarimana regime. So while the genocidal violence appears to have its roots in the ethnic antagonisms between the Tutsi minority, comprising 15% of the population, and the Hutu majority, its content is significantly political. Moreover, the oft-noted Tutsi-Hutu ethnic rivalry is itself a class-driven phenomenon rooted in the colonial incubation of the feudal remains of the hierarchical caste system called *ubuhake* in which the agricultural Hutu peasantry had been subordinated to the pastoralist Tutsi cattle herders and landowners.

Though this caste hierarchy of Tutsi lords and Hutu serfs began to change by the 1940s as both ethnic groups came under the influence of Christianity and Western-

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Spirit of revolt beneath today's Black, Latino, labor reality



Mass rally in Los Angeles challenging a proposed law against immigrant workers in California.

By Gene Ford

Black worker from South Central Los Angeles

The slave roots of Black labor in the United States is an historic fact. But a fact alone does not reflect the consciousness of the human being's natural instinct to break the chains of slavery to be free. This hunger, this American hunger can only be found within the human spirit of man, woman, or child. The facts alone of Blackness and proletarian life do not reflect the spark and explosive reason of a people who have had the greatest voice of freedom, a voice which can still be found in the lowest depths of American society—the urban ghetto.

STRUGGLES FOR RECOGNITION

Today, now that the national unemployment rate among Black youth is officially at an all-time high of 50%, they represent a permanent idle workforce, and a permanent source of revolt. All the state can call for is a permanent presence of police that will smash a strike line the same way they repressed the unemployed and underemployed during the Los Angeles rebellion two years ago.

"Because it is a systematic negation of the other per-

son and a furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity...[colonialism] forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the question constantly: 'In reality, who am I?'" (Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, p. 250)

If Black youth have become invisible because they are 50% unemployed and do not in many ways represent a source of labor within the cities, Latinos do dominate the pool of manual jobs that at one time were a measure of economic power within the Black community. That power brought with it recognition of the Black community's vibrant contribution to urban America.

Today recognition only comes through an underground economy of gangs, the drug trade, and guns all contributing to the culture of imprisonment. A retired autoworker in L.A. stated the dynamic of this problem: "I understand the alienation that is driving the youth in the cities across this country to kill each other in drive-by shooting. The government, the last 12 years, has done drive-by shooting into Third World countries." But without rebellion the creative side of the Black masses is ignored or considered destructive anti-social behavior.

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Editorial

China—5 years after massacre

The fifth anniversary of June 4, 1989, is a moment to commemorate the bloody massacres of over 3,000 students and workers in Beijing's Tiananmen Square and at Chengdu, as well as the executions and mass imprisonment of dissidents that followed. But we cannot forget that this is a struggle that has not disappeared in the face of ruthless repression.

From 1989 on, new organizations and secretly distributed newspapers and posters have appeared even as the secret police have exposed and shut down others. This is one testimony to the power of the Idea of freedom in China today, and the urgency dissidents feel to further develop it. The Chinese have proved wrong the many people who expected the freedom movement to remain dormant until after the death of Deng Xiaoping.

CLINTON IGNORES HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

President Clinton honored not the reality of continued dissent but the fantasy of the Chinese economic miracle on May 26 when he renewed China's most-favored-nation (MFN) trade status. He ignored the report by Human Rights Watch/Asia of over 500 additional prisoners, nearly all workers, still jailed five years later. He disregarded documentation of exports involving labor by political prisoners so he could claim "progress" on human rights, though "not significant." Here is a man who as a candidate two years ago bashed Bush for the same human rights whitewash, and now has formally unhinged China trade from human rights considerations.

The high pressure lobbying to safeguard the U.S.-China \$40 billion in trade came in part from exporters such as agriculture interests, but primarily from companies exploiting Chinese labor with the lowest wages in any broadly industrialized country. Wages remain so low that a U.S. economist criticized striking workers at a factory in the boom part of the economy—export-processing special economic zones in Guangdong province—because at less than \$70 a month they were already overpaid for the region!

At other factories wages might be a fraction of that, or

be withheld for months, not unlike how peasants across many provinces have gotten only IOUs for crops sold to local governments. Even the wages that are received are being undermined by inflation as high as 30% in the big cities, higher yet for basic commodities, and compounded by the sudden absence of subsidized housing for many workers. Little wonder that some full-time workers and their families face malnutrition, or even starvation, in the midst of glitzy new showcase construction projects.

Other workers, particularly in the largest state-run enterprises, are at risk of plant shutdowns and massive layoffs. To find another job a production worker joins 150 million job-seekers pushed off the land.

The obstacles to resistance should be overwhelming. The gigantic army of the unemployed and the army itself, whose budget has tripled since 1989, pose different risks to action on the job. Yet workers have formed over 800 different independent unions in Guangdong as a testament to their widespread initiative and courage.

As well-known dissident journalist Liu Binyan wrote in the journal, *China Focus*, "Since February of this year, the Chinese government has been arresting or detaining dissidents, but it is worried about more than just a few radicals. Some foreign observers think most Chinese are satisfied with the current situation because

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On the Inside

Women of color rethink diversity

by Laurie Green

Women of Color in U.S. Society, ed. by Maxine Baca Zinn and Bonnie Thornton Dill (Temple University Press, 1994), 339 pp.

These essays by Black, Latina, Native American, Asian American and white women social scientists powerfully reject abstractions of feminist theory that detach gender from race and class. Maxine Baca Zinn and Bonnie Thornton Dill explain that the anthology grew out of dialogue at the Center for Research on Women at Memphis State University among scholars who view women of color as pivotal to feminist studies.

Zinn and Dill argue that "[w]omen's lives are shaped as much by relations of dominance based on race and class as those based on gender" (xi). Mere recognition of diversity among women hides the unequal social relations beneath diversity. This seemingly simple statement

Woman as Reason

represents a tremendously important critique of limitations in postmodern feminist theories which stop short after attacking universal, seemingly natural categories of womanhood. "Beyond simply asserting that gender is socially constructed," Zinn and Dill write, "we can begin to account for the multiple connections shaping all women's experiences. Diversity...reveals how genders are constructed out of interlocking systems of inequality" (10).

This insistence that diversity is really about unequal social relations allows these authors to illuminate dimensions of oppression and struggle in the 1990s that are crucial to understand for anyone interested in transforming U.S. society. The intersection of race, class and gender becomes a window into both the objective conditions of social life and subjective developments in consciousness, culture and organization among women of color, especially working-class women.

Karen J. Hossfeld's essay, "Hiring Immigrant Women: Silicon Valley's 'Simple Formula,'" looks at how race, gender and immigrant "logic" informs extremely discriminatory hiring practices in Silicon Valley's semiconductor manufacturing industry. Workers in high-tech production are mostly women from over 30 Latin American and Asian countries, with nearly half from Mexico.

A white male production manager in a printed circuit board assembly shop follows a "simple formula" for hiring: "small, foreign, and female" (65). Gender logic leads white male managers to falsely assume that women rely on husbands' income, while immigrant logic assumes they are willing to make do with abysmal wages and working conditions because they're "used to" them. Racial logic stereotypes Asians as model workers, and Blacks as undependable.

These logics translate into cheap, non-union labor, so these plants stay in Silicon Valley rather than moving overseas in search of cheaper labor or further automating production. "We already have the technology to fully automate everything we do here," comments one manager. "Because of the large supply of unskilled immigrants in the area, labor is still cheaper for doing certain jobs than machines are." (74-5)

This point cuts through a recent intellectual trend to view high tech as the determinant of society rather than human laborers, because it has supposedly made sweatshops obsolete in this "postmodern" age. This thinking renders invisible workers in these sweatshops on which microelectronic technology relies. High-tech production has brought intensified exploitation of women of color and new struggles and consciousness.

Tribunal on sex industry

Organized by the Asian Council for Women's Rights and the Japanese Committee for Women's Rights, an "Asian Tribunal on the Traffic in Women and on War Crimes Against Women" was held in Tokyo in April, with representatives and survivors from 14 Asian countries in attendance. As Shizuko Oshima of Japan noted at the Tribunal, Japan stands as the principal country accused because, despite the recession, its \$30 billion a year sex industry continues to thrive.

Today, 286,000 Filipina women work in Japan in the sex industry; as do 50,000 Thai women. Bengali and Nepalese women are also exploited in large numbers. Frequently, these women come from impoverished rural areas, especially those populated by ethnic minorities. They are enticed or forced into the international traffic in women's bodies. The destination is often Japan, but can also be India, Pakistan or elsewhere.

Takako Doi, former leader of the Japan Socialist Party, addressed the Tribunal, declaring: "The fate of women in a society is a barometer of its capacity to evolve in a more just direction." V.R. Krishna Iyer, an Indian jurist, argued: "The traffic in women should be considered as crime by the whole of humanity."

Corine Kumar, also from India and a co-founder of the Asian Council, stated: "In China in 1995, during the United Nations conference on women, we want to make heard the voices of those who have been victimized. Violence against women needs to be seen as a violation of human rights. Up to now, rape, incest, forced prostitution and mutilation are considered to be merely offenses against individuals."

"We are demanding not so much equality with men as a society which, for both women and men, incorporates feminine values. I don't at all aspire to be equal to men in the world such as it is today, unequal not only for women, but also for the countries of the South."

—Kevin A. Barry

Other essays creatively develop these new structural realities of wage work and family for women of color and issues of resistance. Nazli Kibria's "Migration and Vietnamese American Women: Remaking Ethnicity," challenges views that Vietnamese women migrants see family life as a cultural refuge or, conversely, a patriarchal prison. Because male migrants find marginal jobs rather than better ones like those they left, women workers find themselves less dependent on their husbands. Also, whereas in Vietnam women move into their husbands' families' home, in the U.S. kinship arrangements radically alter. Women do not confront such changes passively. Family life becomes a "contested terrain" on which women struggle to alter power relations.

Cheryl Townsend Gilkes' essay, "If It Wasn't for the Women...": African American Women, Community Work, and Social Change," illuminates how the intersection of race, class and gender shows that diversity involves how consciousness and struggle arise in relation to changed objective conditions. She argues that the "complex historical roles of women" in racially oppressed communities simultaneously encompass both survival and challenge to oppression through formation of organizations and concepts demanding translation into real social power.

One activist she met worked recruiting Black women for the war industry during World War II, and at the same time organized discussions on racism in factories and unions. Another recalled that her women's club administered job training for homemakers and lobbied for protective legislation for household workers in the 1960s and '70s, and that this same club had helped domestics lobby employers for full wages in the 1920s and '30s! Gilkes discovers in this history a process of discovery, challenge and development.

Gilkes illuminates the relation of individuals to society, and consciousness to practice: "[Women's] persistent refusal to accept the discomfort of racial oppression is the conflicted connection between the individual and the society that contributes to the emergence of a social force for change." This refusal is expressed in a multiplicity of diverse experiences, yet each question reflects "the totality of the pressure" African Americans experience and "contains the seeds of rebellion and social change" (241).

Not every essay uncovers seeds of rebellion and change that are this apparent. However, just as each individual challenge represented the universal in Gilkes' analysis, so in this anthology each exploration into the particular, historical intersection of race, class, and gender also sheds light on other possibilities for social transformation. Diversity, in fact, sheds light on the universal question of freedom if it moves us to actually grappling with objective and subjective transformations in conditions and consciousness.

♀ Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Dozens of Belgian women dressed in black march every Wednesday at noon in Brussels in solidarity with women in Belgrade who are protesting Serbia's war on Bosnia. The demonstration was initiated on International Women's Day by the Women's Action Collective in opposition to rape, war crimes, violence against humanity and the European Union's inaction on the war in Bosnia. They vow to march weekly until the war ends.

* * *

Iranian students staged a sit-in demonstration in Tehran's Melli University, May 9, to protest the torture and murder of a woman medical student, Zohreh Ezadabadi, kidnapped from her dorm. The university called it a suicide. Government security forces of the Islamic Republic responded by surrounding and threatening protesters.

—Information from *The Committee for Struggle Against Suppression of Freedom in Iran*

* * *

Families and supporters of the 198 mainly women workers who were killed in the May 1993 fire in the locked Kader toy factory (see June 1993 N&L) took to the streets of Bangkok, Thailand to force the company to increase the meager settlements they had offered. The bosses finally agreed to: larger compensations, payment of full medical expenses for those injured and support for the education of the children of those who died.

Letter from Sister Namibia

Windhoek, Namibia—Although we are doing a lot at Sister Namibia in order to promote women's empowerment and emancipation, our work is often frustrated by the lack of active debate on women's experiences in this society we live in. The debate on abortion, for example, only started recently, and is, unfortunately, very distorted. An evangelist flew in from Texas to express her views on "the killing of God's children" on the radio and TV. And so on and so on. So, it is difficult, but I suppose we'll have to hang in there.

A friend, a member of the Workers Organization for Socialist Action (WOSA) in South Africa, introduced me to *News & Letters*. At the time I went through a "labeling" crisis. I felt that most of the theories I found I could relate to and learn from left out very important information on how we live and relate as human beings. Too many of those theories focused solely on structural issues without addressing the "personal," the "human factor," the different layers of oppression Black women face.

—Sister from Sister Namibia

Night shift in Chicago



News & Letters

Editor's note—Two thousand janitors rallied in Chicago May 12 for "Justice for Janitors," rejecting the two-tier wage system and 25-cent raise BOMA (Building Owners and Managers Association) had offered SEIU Local 25. BOMA backed down on the two-tier system, but the final agreement includes a 25-cent annual raise for three years. Below is an interview with a woman who cleans a downtown office building at night.

I wasn't dreaming to come to this job, but life made me come because my family comes first. All my life since I was married at age 18, I've worked one shift and my husband worked another shift because we have two kids. The only way we were going to be there for them, we decided, is either I'm not going to work and we'd live the best we can, or if I work, one of us is going to work days and the other nights so somebody is there for our kids.

You've got to understand that most of the members of Local 25, like 60%, are ladies. It's housekeeping. A 62-year-old lady in the building across from ours was raped and stabbed in the elevator. She was a cleaning lady like us. Nobody comes up to you and says, "I'll keep an eye on you." You're afraid of your shadow.

When I start working at 5 p.m., some people are working up there, and then comes 8 p.m. and it's deserted. Then you're afraid of every little move that you hear. This is how nerve-racking it is. When we go home it's only us and homeless people on the street. We go in groups, but we're still not safe.

We have guards, but how far can you stretch a couple of guards in a building so big? I used to work three quarters of one floor and one quarter of another. By the end of the night, there would be two girls on the same floor, which helped because those are the worst hours. Now I do the whole floor by myself. We had 32 people a couple of years ago. We are now down to 16.

We work with antique equipment. When you use the vacuum night after night, it falls apart. And they won't replace it. We had a smart lady who hit the vacuum over the floor and said, "Now fix it." You get desperate. And gloves? It's unheard of, but should be mandatory because there are diseases we know and don't know about.

Cleaning is important. They come in there where it's nice and clean, and no one appreciates it. When they spill and stuff, they look at you like you have to do it. All the popcorn, all the chicken bones, fish bones on the floor, all the cigarette ashes and coffee mess.

We might be cleaning garbage, but we are not garbage. BOMA has got to understand that. They treat you like a second-class citizen, like you don't exist. We have rallies and bosses have actually come and threatened to fire the ladies. The people who don't speak English are afraid. Most are from Eastern bloc countries that were communist, and they don't want to say nothing.

In a lot of companies the ladies are not allowed to have lunch together. I work for my lunch! These girls don't know their rights. People are waking up and saying, hey, we are worth it, we are human beings.

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Caterpillar rally, walkouts demand fairness

Chicago—Over 15,000 workers attended a Rally for Workers Rights on May 7 in Peoria, Ill. to defend Caterpillar workers' rights to a fair contract. What was so moving about the rally was seeing so many people from around the U.S. and other countries come together. At the podium were representatives from Belgium, Brazil, England, Japan and, yes, from South Africa. Each name was called, and each one stood up and raised their arms in salutation. They received thunderous applause. It gave one a feeling for the possibilities of what a workers' movement could be when it is truly worldwide.

—Diane Lee

Morton, Ill.—People at the Mossville Caterpillar plant walked out on May 16. The company had suspended more than 30 people who brought in balloons with pro-union slogans. After the third day they brought everybody back. Most of the walkouts have been over indefinite suspensions of union representatives or people strongly behind the union, shop stewards and committee people.

At the Morton plant, since the early 1980s, we have gone from 2,200 to under 800 workers represented by

Up against Staley lockout

Editor's note: Workers at A.E. Staley, members of Paperworkers/AIW Local 7837, have been locked out since June 1993 for refusing to concede all of their rights to management. A National Mobilization for the Locked-Out Staley Workers is planned for June 25. Write Local 7837 at 2882 North Dineen, Decatur, IL 62526, or call (217) 876-7006 for details.

Decatur, Ill.—One of our people was found guilty for throwing road jacks. He could go to jail for a year and be fined \$1,000. It was a jury trial, but no one was surprised by the outcome. The whole town is bought off by Staley.

One guy with a sign was walking at Staley's west gate during a rally. They arrested him. He was doing what he was supposed to, moving back and forth, but they charged him with obstructing traffic. They aren't going to drop charges; they are going to try to set an example.

When they look at what we are up against with the lockout, a lot of good union people and locals are saying we have to stop and fight. Hopefully these unions will look around and say, "We're next," and ask, "What's going to happen to our kids?"

—Locked-out Staley worker

This lockout has bothered young people here quite a bit. They learn to curb back on activities and clothes. Kids in college have had to drop out. There are plenty of sons and daughters in high school, good kids with good grades, who have to go into the Army instead of college. There are no loans and no money to send them to school. They have problems with this situation. So part of my idea is to get kids to understand the unions. They fought this battle in the 1930s. Why do we have to do it again?

—Black unionist

Unemployment has run out. Locked-out Staley workers have to go out and beat the bushes now. It's hard because Staley sent out a letter smearing every one of us. They also send out a monthly report to all the businesses in Decatur saying we were disruptive and that we were bad workers. The fact is they are trying to destroy the locked-out union workers.

—Staley worker

Delano revisited

San Francisco—The United Farm Workers (UFW) march from Delano to Sacramento in April 1994 (see May N&L) reminded me that I went to Delano in 1966 when they were organizing the farm workers' union and drumming up support for the grape strike, not only in California but across the country. What was impressive was all the youth who came out to support it and the Chicano intellectuals from Los Angeles; CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) even sent some people down there.

There was a huge compound constructed where many strikers actually lived. Daily entertainment was done by Teatro Campesino; food was always being cooked. It wasn't a typical strike where workers leave the picket line and go home for the night. There was tremendous support from the community.

The union had the effect of bringing out a new consciousness of self to Chicanos/as in California. It went beyond just organizing farm workers. The Left had always said you could never organize the farm workers, they'll never go up against the big landowners, and so on. Then Cesar Chavez came out of nowhere, right from the fields; nobody had heard of him. How do you explain it? It was a type of internal self-organization, and it won many concessions along with winning the actual strike, which meant recognition of the union.

Despite that, the conditions haven't changed much. Many of the victories of the 1960s and 1970s have been lost. I always had the feeling that part of the decline of the UFW was due to it becoming more a type of union like the A.F. of L. instead of the new type of organization it was in the beginning when it wasn't just the workers but their families and friends—the whole community. Now the struggle goes on. Those "factories in the field" are going to exist as long as the system exists that produces them.

—John Alan

the union. The people left are people who have more than 20 years in seniority. They're doing the same jobs they were doing when they hired in; all the easier jobs are gone.

The company used to have six to eight job classifications. Now there are only two. Management has combined them all; anybody can do anything. When someone quits or retires, instead of filling the job, most of the time they just divide the work up and give it to the peo-



News & Letters

Caterpillar international rally in Peoria, Ill.

ple who are left. Management is treating employees like machines. They turn up the speed and turn it up some more.

We had a rally earlier with people from all over. A man from South Africa involved with the union spoke there. The companies want to do away with things that the unions have gained. It seems to be happening all over. Like Cat is now saying how community-oriented they are, but when they wanted us to go along with their cuts, they said, "We are a multinational company now." It boils down to not people, but just dollars and cents.

—Caterpillar worker

Comité Costureros

Los Angeles—I have been a garment worker for almost 20 years, and I can tell you a lot. Salaries in the garment industry are miserable—only minimum wage, a little more than minimum wage. There are no clean bathrooms, no lunch rooms, and cockroaches are everywhere. Conditions are really bad, and bosses sometimes don't even pay their workers. That is why we, the Comité Costureros (Garment Workers Committee), are organizing.

Our Comité has been organizing for less than one year. At one point we tried to affiliate with a union, but they were not serious about the situation. We decided to organize ourselves and later to find a syndicate that would suit our needs. There are always independent struggles. That is why we are fighting, because we see there is material available for us to organize.

We distribute our newsletter at plant gates, but not as much as we like to. One article talked about how last year the company called LA Gear had \$183 million in profits; another one called Guess had \$175 million. This has a lot of impact because a lot of people in the industry think that the bosses and owners are poor. But we show that they don't want to pay. We have also been passing out a lot of fliers about how the racist immigration laws are going to affect us, how these laws will deny us our medical care, how they deny our children an education.

At my work every day there was talk about the rebellion in Chiapas. People were talking about how the government was killing the people and all the injustices that were going on down there, and you can see more every day the repression of these people. We were protesting at the consulate and had a forum about it also.

There are a lot of people who have a tendency to say: Well, we are not in Mexico and we can't fight here. I think it has to do with a lot of people not having papers, not being legal. And they think that their fight is not here, it is over there. The struggle that is going on here has made us realize that we are never going back to our country because of the misery down there. We have to struggle here. If not, we are going to see the same conditions that are in Mexico.

—Martha B.

Indian factory occupied

Nagpur, India—The workers in the Kameia Jute Mill in the state of West Bengal kicked out the established trade unions, formed an independent union, occupied the factory and even started production on their own, defying court orders. This act of the workers has given a slap in the face to the Stalinist CPM (Communist Party-Marxist) government in West Bengal.

The movement has received tremendous support from workers all over the country. Even a section of the intellectuals, artists, film stars and singers rallied around the Kameia workers and donated huge sums of money towards the movement. The community kitchen run by the workers was a great success. Although the movement has finally become a movement for a workers' co-operative, the initial enthusiasm generated is unprecedented.

—A.G.

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

We don't have many Black drivers here. A Black guy (B.) who just (finally) made the list began on nights, running linehaul. I'd seen many other casuals come and go. After a few weeks or a few months, the supervisor would say, "I'm not using so and so anymore, he's too slow" or "he's got an attitude" or whatever.

They loved B. "He's a good man," the supervisor would say. Why? He'd run linehaul in record time—work hard, drive fast, waste no time, never complain. That's what you have to do as a casual here to last. Of course, the other drivers complained about this guy. If the company allows 9 hours for a run and you do it in 7½, it makes everyone look bad.

I don't condone that, but I didn't turn my back on B. either. I answered all his questions about the union, the job and our rights as best I could. I tried to help the man. Sure enough, he slowed down and started to speak up for himself after a few months, once he had his foot in the door.

RACISM OF THE BOSS

Look, here is a Black man with a family to support. Here are all these white drivers, criticizing him and hating him. Is any one of them going to feed his family? Is any one of them reaching a hand out to their union "brother"? As C., who is Puerto Rican, told me, "You can see you have to work twice as hard to get on the list here if you're not white," due to the racism of the boss (and my supervisor is openly racist).

I guess B. did what he felt he had to do to keep the job. No one tried to talk to the man in an open way, recognizing this. Instead of shutting the man out, we should criticize the system, the contract, that puts casuals in such a precarious position. We should explain to them what protections they do have. And we should stop being blind to the racism of the boss. That is the hardest. I myself didn't see it for a long time.

It can be hard to see, because the boss will be color blind when it comes to getting out production. He will use whoever gets the work out. I was used, A. was used, B. was used. If we blame the one who is put in that situation, rather than the boss or the contract or whatever makes that situation possible in the first place, that is a dead end. If we turn our back on that guy, he has nowhere to run but to the boss.

ENEMIES? OR POTENTIAL ALLIES?

If we give him our hand and make him strong, then we are really a union. That's how the CIO was built. Employers like Ford brought Black workers up from the South as strikebreakers. The United Auto Workers did not attack them, but went to the Black community and the Black churches, explained the struggle and said: Join us—and that is what happened. If the auto workers had turned on the Black workers as their enemies, rather than potential allies, we would not have had the CIO.

Only feeling part of a real union of all workers can overcome the fears of Black and immigrant workers. Instead of working fast to protect their jobs, solidarity will protect their jobs, but they have to feel that. We have let a situation develop where we take care of "our own" exclusively. The bosses are using this against us, and we have to begin to reach out and admit we can't solve our problems all alone.

Teamsters: what about 1998?

Chicago—In the recent Teamster strike against the 23 members of the Trucking Management Inc. (TMI) bargaining group, many drivers lost \$4,000 or more each in wages. The International union paid out nearly \$30 million in strike benefits and without major changes will soon be broke. TMI had gambled that, as in February's day-long strike against United Parcel Service, most locals wouldn't walk out. In late April TMI finally admitted that the Teamsters would stand firm. They agreed to a package which, while a step backward, could be much worse.

The proposed introduction of half-price dock workers is gone and use of railroads instead of drivers is capped, but at the cost of lost overtime for dock workers, more arbitration of deadlocked grievances and lower wages for new hires. The union won dozens of other improvements, notably a new "innocent until proven guilty" policy toward disciplined workers who used to be on the street until their cases were heard. Many of the most important issues, like workers having any time for a life, weren't on the table.

Few members like the current proposal. Members are asking, "Is it bad enough to vote down? Could we do any better?" Probably not. A bigger question is: Will we be able to prevent a lockout at TMI's four largest members in 1998?

Over the next four years the Big Four will near completion of national networks of regional nonunion carriers. Other nonunion LTL (less than truckload) carriers will keep growing. The Teamsters will have to stop the infighting and pass a dues increase—rejected 3 to 1 in a recent referendum—or go broke. And NAFTA will allow management wholesale use of Mexican carriers and drivers in the U.S. Meanwhile, the Workplace Fairness Act, which would prohibit the permanent replacement of economic strikers, is poised for another quiet death in the Senate. Before the next contract deadline the Teamsters must mount an organizing campaign the likes of which has not been seen in decades—or say goodbye to tens of thousands of jobs.

—Yellow Freight driver

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya Marxist-Humanist Archives

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

Editor's note: Of the vast number of Raya Dunayevskaya's writings on Mao Zedong and philosophy, we are publishing a section taken from her *Perspectives Report* to the 1968 Convention of News and Letters Committees called "From Culture to Philosophy to Revolution, or Hegel's Phenomenology and Mao's Cultural Revolution." It was written during the time Dunayevskaya was intensively working out the book which became *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao*. The full report was titled "The Missing Link" and is included in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection* (Microfilm #4123-4142). All page references in the text to *Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind* are to the Baillie translation.

In a muted form, Czechoslovakia has been showing all over again what the supreme elemental outburst of proletarian revolution in Hungary had revealed in 1956, that the struggle for freedom involves, among other things, a breakthrough in the field of ideas against the entrenched ideology—what Marx called the Fetishism of Commodities, or private property and "equality of exchange and Bentham." [Capital, p. 195, Kerr edition] These fetishes of capitalistic culture, in its private form, had been replaced in state-capitalistic Communism by State Property and the Vanguard Party. It is these the Hungarian Revolution demolished and Czechoslovakia is again challenging. In their place the Hungarian Freedom Fighters had established Workers Councils, many and such a free flow of ideas that the Humanism of Marx saw its first direct historic re-establishment. It is this which has never stopped haunting Mao to this day.

Despite the opportunism and pure anti-Russian chauvinism which has led Mao presently to oppose the Russian invasion [of Czechoslovakia], Mao has not changed one iota from 1956 when he urged Khrushchev—not that Khrushchev needed much urging—to lead a counter-revolution against the Hungarian Freedom Fighters.

It is true that in China itself, for a brief few weeks (from May 8 to mid-June in 1957), Mao had opened a new road called "Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom, Let One Hundred Schools of Thought Contend." But the hypocrisy was clear from the start in the insistence that, under all circumstances, one and only one Party remains the "leader." In any case, as we all know, the moment the voices of revolt began contending vigorously against Mao, stating that what they had in China was not genuine Marxism, freedom, that freedom to speak out was ended, and, instead, China embarked on the so-called Great Leap Forward.

Now the shock for needing to end all freedom of speech in China, too, sent that Alienated Soul or Unhappy Consciousness—Mao, after all, had once been a revolutionary—to retrace the stages of alienation described in the *Phenomenology* as if he were being stage-directed by Hegel from his grave.

Marx, you will remember from the chapter "Why Hegel? Why Now?*", considered Hegel's *Phenomenology* "the birthplace of the Hegelian dialectic," which contained "all the elements of criticism"—and here we must remember the meaning of criticism as negation of what is, so I repeat—"criticism frequently worked out in a manner far beyond the Hegelian standpoint," that is to say, very nearly Marxist. The alienation of Reason as well as of Labor, of Spirit (which includes Culture) as well as of Religion—the whole dialectic of theory and practice moving toward a unity in the Absolute Idea—revealed its objectivity in such great depths that Marx made it foundation of historical materialism.

Marx insisted that Hegel's abstractions were, in fact,

criticisms of "whole spheres like religion, the state, bourgeois life, etc." Marx singled out special sections in order to stress that the distinctions that Hegel drew did, indeed, "reach the nub of the matter." The part that directly concerns us here was the one Hegel entitled "Spirit in Self-Estrangement, the Discipline of Culture."

Note, please, that self-estrangement, alienation, has not been overcome though we have now reached the part [in the *Phenomenology*] on Spirit which is the cornerstone of the Hegelian "system." Remember also that Hegel was himself a bourgeois and wasn't out to destroy bourgeois society. Nevertheless, so devastating was his criticism of its beginnings in the Enlightenment that very nearly nothing has to be added by Marxists provided, of course, they understand that, in Hegel, the critique is "standing on its head," that is to say, is dealt



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with only in its thought forms. What saved Hegel was his profound, comprehensive, objective historic sense. Thus he praises the Enlightenment's struggle against superstition. "Enlightenment," he wrote, "upsets the household arrangements, which spirit carries out in the house of faith, by bringing in the goods and furnishings belonging to the world of the Here and Now..." (p. 512)

In our day, the positive feature of a new culture "upsetting the household arrangements"—in our case, the dominant prejudices which constitute white culture's "faith"—"by bringing in the goods and furnishings belonging to the world of the Here and Now," is seen in such slogans as "Black Is Beautiful." First, because it is true, and secondly because such separation from the dominant superstition is a step toward a new revolution, even as the Enlightenment was a step toward the French Revolution, and the Chinese did away with the comprador bestiality of Chiang Kai-Shek.

What happens the day after the positive features, which are but beginnings, is what Hegel was tracing and criticizing. First, what Hegel called the spiritual life of "pure culture," which is always just on the surface, "is the absolute and universal inversion of reality and thought, their entire estrangement the one from the other...each is the opposite of itself" (p. 541) This is so because, to begin with, the here and the now was a "self-estranged reality." It must therefore be negated again, but the limitations of culture make this impossible for by now "the noble type of consciousness" finds itself "related to state power." (p. 526) The inexorable next stage is that "in place of revolt appears arrogance." (p. 539)

"Culture takes up nothing but the self and everything as the self, i.e., it comprehends everything, extinguishes all objectiveness." (p. 512) Spirit, says Hegel, thereupon "constructs not merely one world, but a two-fold world, divided and self-opposed." (p. 510) There is no escaping the development that "in place of revolt appears arrogance"—unless one sees it as but a "shrivelled skin" and is ready to slough it off. But that can hardly be done while you're still in the culture skin, while your "self-diremption" cannot move you from individual ego to universal mind so that you get to true individuality or, as Hegel called it in *Philosophy of Mind*, "individuality freed of all that interferes with its universality, that is freedom." (para. 481) Once freedom is the goal, then

nothing, culture included, will be allowed to stand in its way. Only then, to repeat the expression Hegel borrowed from Diderot, will "some fine morning, it (spirit) give its comrade a shove with the elbow, when, bash! crash!—and the idol is lying on the floor." (p. 565)

But this "bash! crash!" can't just be destruction—which is what attracts all—it can come only when a new road to freedom is open before you. It got open in the *Phenomenology* because it was Mind, Spirit, the Dialectic of Theory and Practice which did the shoving, made Reason see that Culture was but "shrivelled skin" that must be sloughed off if the road to revolution (the French Revolution in Hegel's case) was to be open. And the French Revolution was, to Hegel, the supreme outburst of spiritual emancipation.

If religion is the opiate of the people, culture is the "rum and coca-cola" come-on. In the case of Mao, once the alienation from the masses possessed him, he engaged in such a "giddy whirl of self-perpetuating disorder" (p. 249) called "Great Leap Forward" that it brought the country to near famine. The labor regimentation which Mao dared call "Communes" had long ago been much more precisely characterized by Hegel as "Self-Contained Individuals Associated as a Community of Animals and the Deception Thence Arising." (p. 419) (Ask me some day how Marx uses this section in the *Grundrisse*.)

Having failed to create a revolution in production relations, Mao had no choice but to go in for the epiphenomenal.

At first he had tried to escape the relegation to the cultural sphere. It is to be doubted that Mao understood or had ever read Hegel's analysis of culture as "self-diremption," but everyone in the movement did know at least the vulgarized Marxian version that culture was mere superstructure as against the basic structure of capitalism, i.e., its mode of production. What gave Mao a second chance to escape the epiphenomenal was the rise of the Third World in the early 1960s. He then attempted to mask his opposition to proletarian revolution by declaring the new, Third World of underdeveloped countries to be the "true storm centers of world revolution."

Thereby he hoped to win this new world and challenge Russia's leadership of the Communist world. It almost worked! U.S. imperialism's attack on South Vietnam in February 1965, however, made clear the need for united actions—and when Mao refused such a united front with Russia to aid Vietnam, it brought about new opposition both within his own Central Committee and on the part of other Communist Parties who previously had taken the Chinese side in the Sino-Soviet conflict.

It was then, and only then, that Mao dropped the other shoe—revealing the true retrogressionist character of his thought. You could say that, though Mao didn't recognize philosophy, philosophy recognized him so long ago it predicted his coming. The fetishistic character of the so-called cultural revolution struck out, not against exploitative production, but the bland "four olds" (old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits). All sound and fury and no class content. Only he who has no future is so scared of the past! By any other name, including that of Red Guards, the elitist character of Party, Army, Red Guards and what now merged into the one and only "helmsman at the ship of state" is as unmistakable as was Louis XIV's "L'etat c'est moi."

A single look at the deification of Mao that has taken place since the cultural revolution and one must conclude that Hegel did, after all, underestimate the arrogance of the illegitimate offspring that was to crop up 160 years after the publication of *The Phenomenology of Mind*.

It is not Mao that concerns us. The only reason we spent so much time on him is because in this year of transition, when genuine freedom movements are arising very nearly daily, we have to answer: what can possibly be the pull of Mao—or, for that matter, Castro—upon today's young revolutionaries, Black and white, who are neither tied to state power, or elite party and/or guerrilla band, much less hunger for single world mastery?

The genius of Hegel, his relevance for today, is that he summed up what he called "the experiences of consciousness" in so comprehensive, so profound a manner over so long a stretch of man's development—from 500 B.C. and the Greek city-states to 1800 A.D. and the French Revolution—that the tendencies in the summation of the past give us a glimpse of the future, especially when materialistically understood in a Marxist-Humanist, not vulgar economist, manner.

Briefly, it is this. There is a dialectic of thought from consciousness through culture to philosophy. There is a dialectic of history from slavery through serfdom to free wage labor.

There is a dialectic of the class struggle in general and under capitalism in particular—and, as it develops through certain specific stages from competition through monopoly to state, it in each case calls forth new forms of revolt and new aspects of the philosophy of revolution. Only a Marx could work out the latter. What Hegel had shown were the dangers inherent in the French Revolution which did not end in the millenium but in Napoleon. In a word, the dialectic disclosed that the counter-revolution is within the revolution.

It is the greatest challenge man ever had to face. In our age of state-capitalism, totalitarianism, and

(continued on page 5)

The dimension of China in the Marxist-Humanist Archives

自由

FREEDOM

Selected documents by Raya Dunayevskaya include:

* *Only Freedom Can Solve the Crisis*
(News & Letters, July 16, 1957)

Critique of the "Hundred Flowers Campaign" and Mao's "How to Handle Contradictions Among the People"

* *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions* (1959)

Contains critique of Mao's "administrative mentality" as new danger threatening the revolutionary movements

* *The Challenge of Mao-Tse Tung*
chapter 17 of *Marxism and Freedom* (1964)
(also available in Chinese)

* *The Thought of Mao-Tse Tung*
chapter 5 of *Philosophy and Revolution* (1973)

* *Post-Mao China: What Now?*
Contained in *New Essays* (1977)

* *Whither China?*
(News & Letters, March 1977)
On how "the power of China's revolt is that it helps us to pose a pathway out of the retrogression"

To order any of the above materials, or the dozens of other writings on modern China found in the Archives of Marxist-Humanism, contact News & Letters.

* Dunayevskaya had been circulating draft chapters for her book in progress, *Philosophy and Revolution*. The quotes from Marx in this and the next paragraph are from his 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*.

Dialogue with a Zapatista revolutionary

Chicago—A brief yet fruitful dialogue with a representative of the ongoing Zapatista revolt in Chiapas, Mexico occurred here on May 18, when Pedro Castillo, a spokesperson from the legal wing of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) and Coordination of Civic Action for National Liberation, addressed a small audience of students and community activists. Castillo focused on how the Zapatista revolt, which began the day the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) took effect last January, had already succeeded in shaking up the entire political landscape of Mexico.

"As a result of the revolt of last January, the whole of Mexico is now being forced to take account of the reality of the suffering of the indigenous people of Chiapas," Castillo declared. This has created "a new reality" which will not be swept aside by the results of the presidential elections this August.

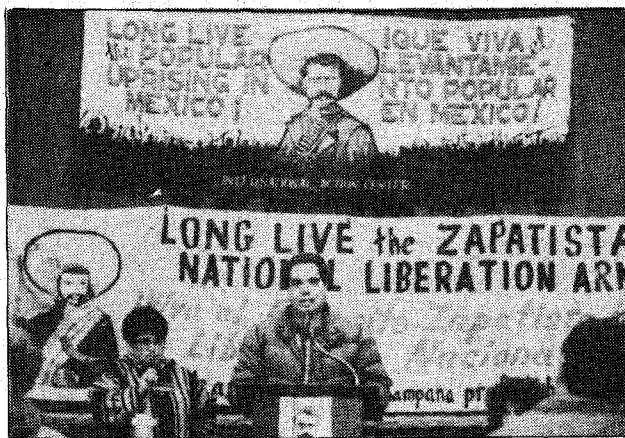
Castillo said the ideas of the Zapatistas "are derived from the consciousness of the masses themselves," who took up arms in response to the revocation of Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution, which had guaranteed land to whoever works it. "It took a million lives during the [Mexican] Revolution to win that right; we refuse to go backward," he said. He added that instead of trusting the approaching elections to resolve such problems, the Zapatistas are preparing for "large-scale civilian insurrection" in the event the elections are stolen by the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party.

The most interesting part of the meeting consisted of Castillo's response to questions about the overall aims and ideology of the Zapatistas. After a question about whether the Zapatistas aspire to the revolutionary transformation of Mexican society as a whole, Castillo stated that while the "fundamental contradiction" facing Mexico remains that of labor vs. capital, the "immediate contradiction" now facing the masses is the "savagery of international capital" as embodied in NAFTA vs. all those in Mexican society, from workers to small businessmen, who stand opposed to it. For this reason, he said, the present struggle is defined by the need for "greater democracy" and "mass participation in decision-making."

Though it was hard not to hear in Castillo's response

an echo of the old Maoist refrain about "primary" and "secondary" contradictions "exchanging places," it was also clear from his talk that some new ideas have surfaced within the Zapatistas. This was especially evident from his response to a question about whether he supports the concept of a "vanguard party to lead" which has heretofore predominated in the Latin American Left.

Castillo stated, "I believe that revolutionary ideas also have to be revolutionized—and this idea of the vanguard party is one of them. We categorically reject this theory of the vanguard. This idea of a vanguard party has created many problems in the past, and we are con-



Pedro Castillo speaking in Detroit, prior to his Chicago meeting.

scious of that. We can't put forward any one group or party as being in control; we need many organizations, many struggles, working together for liberation. We know of no model for achieving this."

Hopefully, the coming period will witness additional opportunities for revolutionaries in the U.S. and Mexico to directly engage each other on how to "revolutionize the ideas" of liberation which today's changed world has found wanting.

—Peter Wermuth

A perspective on the South African elections

Editor's note: On the eve of the historic South African elections, exiled South African writer and revolutionary activist Phyllis Jordan spoke at an ecumenical vigil of the South African community in Washington, D.C. Following are brief excerpts from her talk.

The ANC (African National Congress) from its inception has been bourgeois in its outlook. There will be those who will argue that the very principles of equality and democracy are revolutionary in the South African context. However, it must be pointed out that the ANC never sought to overthrow the existing bourgeois order in South Africa. It sought to join it. This is not to say that there were never revolutionary elements in the ANC; their position was never dominant.

This is not said to denigrate the ANC. For, if the nationalism the ANC represents is compared to Afrikaaner nationalism, its strengths and basic humanity become apparent: non-racism as opposed to racism; equality as opposed to privilege; democracy as opposed to tyranny; and incorporation as opposed to exclusion.

We will not dwell on the ANC between its banning in 1960 and the Soweto uprising in 1976. This uprising is climactic in the history of resistance in South Africa. Although it and its confluent protests were suppressed with a brutality appalling even by the regime's brutal standards, it is still a watershed event. For it demonstrated to the government that although the older liberation organizations had been suppressed, resistance to apartheid was still strong. The decade 1976-1986 was the high-water mark of Black protest. It is during this decade of seeming continual crisis that the first contacts are made between the ANC and the National Party (NP). But, WHY?

Piet Botha and the "securocrats" tried to kill two birds with one stone. They would stem the flood of Black protest by abolishing what was termed "petty apartheid," while at the same time satisfying the Afrikaaner bourgeoisie by giving them a stable Black urban workforce. Thus the "Botha Reforms" of the 1980s.

Hegel and Mao

(continued from page 4)

transformation into opposite of the proletarian revolutionary party to the Single State Party, philosophy is not only the abandoned orphan for whom no one cares, much less cares to develop and labor at and with. It is the missing link everyone—everyone except us—is determined will never be found. Time is so short, yes. But without such "labor, patience, seriousness and suffering of the negative" the danger is that you fall backward, just when you are on the threshold of high new adventure, into one of the existing world societies, rather than move forward to a new society.

So it is neither Napoleon nor Mao; neither the White Terror that followed the defeat of the Paris Commune nor Stalin-Khrushchev-Brezhnev-Kosygin type of counter-revolution; neither Guevara's tragic death nor Castro's approval of the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, though all of these have lessons for us. Rather it is we, right here and now, as we try to prepare for a future that does not repeat the past.

The ANC was also in crisis. Effective abroad only as a propaganda organ, virtually non-existent within South Africa, its "armed struggle" reduced to something resembling a farce, it faced the prospect of being overtaken and marginalized by events within the country.

It is here that the convergence of interests between the ANC and the National Party takes place. The NP needed the ANC to bring stability to the country; and the ANC needed the NP to legitimize its claim to being the only true representative of the African people. It was clearly in the interests of both parties to negotiate.

The bourgeois character of the negotiations is illustrated by the parties that eventually joined them. The Black labor movement, Black civic organizations, and Black peasant organizations were denied independent representation, while Mandela insisted that the Bantustan and other so-called "traditional African Leaders" be accorded full representation. This, of course, skewed the whole basis of the talks to the right, with no unwelcome "Left" issues intruding on the agenda.

And so, we come to the elections. Those elected to Parliament will be candidates chosen by the contending parties. They will not represent any particular constituencies. As such, they will be answerable only to the parties that chose them, not to the voters. Voters will have no right of recall.

The new government will preside over a country whose economy is in recession; a country where seven million Blacks live in shacks; where the Black unemployment rate is over 50%; where Black income is 10% that of whites, with 95% of Blacks earning only \$220 per month; where 12 million Black households have no clean water, where 14 million people are functionally illiterate, and where 1.5 million Black children received no schooling in 1992. That my friends, is the legacy of apartheid.

Is this the revolution for which so many of our people have died? The obvious answer is: For the majority of South Africans the answer is NO! What is taking place in South Africa is not a revolution. It is merely the replacement of one administration by another, both drawn from the same class—the bourgeoisie—albeit that one administration was white and the next will be Black.

Did the ANC betray Black South Africa? Again the answer is NO! What we have is a classical deal: the Afrikaaner bourgeoisie ditching the white working class, and the ANC dropping all pretence of ever having represented the Black working class and peasantry. That the ANC used the Black working class and peasantry to achieve its aims is undeniable. But that is not unusual. The French bourgeoisie used the peasantry to gain power in 1789.

In the final analysis, all we can say is that the struggle for total liberation has only begun. The majority of South Africans will get absolutely nothing from the so-called "new dispensation." One does hope that the various elements that have been left out of the new political dispensation will find one another, stand up fearlessly, articulating clearly the goals of the majority of South Africans. In that task, they cannot and must not allow themselves to be distracted by the blandishments of the new Black bourgeois order. This is our task!

A LUTA CONTINUA!!

Dominican election fraud

New York—When the ballots were counted from the May 16 election in the Dominican Republic, few were surprised that President Joaquín Balaguer emerged victorious. His closest rival, Jose Francisco Peña Gómez denounced the results as fraudulent. Accounts by Peña Gómez's Dominican Revolutionary Party and U.S. observers point to a purge of upward of 200,000 voters from the rolls, exceeding the margin of Balaguer's win. Juan Bosch, president at the time of the 1965 U.S.-led Organization of American States (OAS) invasion, came in a distant third.

The candidates were brought violently onto the national and international scene by the explosive mass revolt that began to take shape after World War II and became fully known to the world in 1965. A fight for a democratic constitution transformed itself into a popular rebellion with a revolutionary content. It was then that President Johnson, fearing the making of "another Cuba," sought to repress the revolt by sending the marines and forces of the OAS troops.

The uprising, however, was defeated not only by military and clerical forces, supported by imperialists, but by theoretical and philosophic limitations and contradictions within the popular movement itself. The leftist organizations gave capitalism the "means" to reorganize itself upon new grounds: a defeated democratic movement. Ever since, fraud has characterized Dominican elections.

What followed was "12 years of terror" and "economic restructuring" of Balaguer's Social Christian Reformist Party, eight years of the Caribbean Basin Initiative's austerity under Peña Gómez's party, and eight more years of Balaguer's state-run privatization and enterprise.

The 1994 elections look like a repeat of the fraud in the 1990 election, on lesser grounds because this time a lot of young people voted for Balaguer. The victim this time is Peña Gómez's party, which is contesting the vote, while Bosch's party neither sees nor hears any evil—exactly what Peña Gómez did in 1990 against Bosch who won the election that time, but negotiated. Balaguer and Peña Gómez seem to be willing to negotiate some kind of agreement, or the latter would be calling for the restraint of his rank-and-file militants and working-class supporters. Bosch's popularity dropped since his narrow defeat in 1990 because of similar conservative politics.

Balaguer has a good possibility of remaining in state power, in part because his political opponents give him his actuality. The opposition, Peña's and Bosch's parties, have always been in disagreement. However, Balaguer does not divide them; these parties divide themselves quite spontaneously from each other as their own contradictions arise from within.

The opposition opposes itself, not on principle—after all they are parties—but on who has more power, who wins more votes, and who gets to administer the state or capital. Balaguer simply plays these obvious divisions out. The other candidates pretend to be what they are not: genuine alternatives. They are based not against degenerate capitalism, but upon ethical grounds, on personality, a terrain where Balaguer is the one with the least to lose.

This is how political discourse switched from substantial economics and social issues to that of "Dominicanity," or who is more Dominican. In other words, since none of the candidates challenge capitalist production as fundamental to politics, political debate ran around a new novelty: Peña Gómez, a Black candidate and personality. Within this new context arose once again the anti-Haitian as what "defines" "Dominican": racism.

For his part, Peña Gómez fought to prove how "Dominican" a Black can be. He doesn't give a damn about the Haitian workers, and workers in general outside of the abstract labor of his bourgeois politics of "investing in people."

The true negation of both Dominican and Haitian bourgeois neocolonial identity, the poorest, most oppressed and most necessary working people on the whole island are the Haitian workers. They are paid in misery, exploited, and treated worse than dogs by both states. They are the point of unity to follow.

—Sin Mas

Editorial

(continued from page 1)

their standard of living has improved. If that were true, then the dissidence of a few would be no cause for government concern. In fact, the dissatisfaction in Chinese society is already quite obvious. Moreover, things today are different from 1989; this time, workers and peasants may well play major roles. That is what the government is most afraid of."

DISSIDENTS' REVOLUTIONARY TRADITION

A look at China is a glimpse of our own future if the capitalists' vision of a restructured global economy is not stopped first. There is much for us to emulate in China's dissidents, including those workers and peasants that Deng and his fellow rulers fear. There is a revolutionary tradition for the whole of the 20th century. Not even Mao's prestige and authority stopped expressions of dissent—from the Hundred Flowers period through the April 5, 1976 demonstration after Zhou Enlai's death.

It is equally clear that Deng's military-based authority has not sidetracked a movement determined to defend itself and work out the shape of its future.

May 27, 1994

WHAT NEXT IN SOUTH AFRICA'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM?

I remember how the Left press always wrote about the way an ANC government in South Africa could help drive the economic development of a revolutionary Africa. According to their thinking, capitalism would be on its way out. Remembering that, it was quite a shock to see, in Lou Turner's lead article (May N&L), that this rhetoric has been taken up by the Afrikaaner elite. Where does this leave the masses of Black people? At this year's African Liberation Day parade on Chicago's impoverished West Side, I saw one youth carrying a hand-lettered sign that said a lot: "Is South Africa FREE? Are WE?"

Fred
Chicago

Bourgeois society is so degenerate, so thoroughly anti-human, that now we're supposed to accept the idea that genocide is natural (Bosnia, Rwanda, Cambodia). The absolute opposite is seen in the South African 14-year-olds who have got Hegel's concept of having their own minds and a concept of "full-blown liberty" which is not based on any existing society.

Anne Jaclard
New York

The analysis of South Africa and the contradictions facing it described in the lead article in last month's N&L provided a comprehensive perspective from which to view developments there. The duplicity of de Klerk, which you had warned of in earlier analyses, was confirmed again with the recent disclosure that he made a secret deal with the Zulu nation two days before the election, ceding it a huge tract of land that threatens Mandela's land reform program. With de Klerk and Buthelezi in leading positions of government, more betrayals are sure to follow, confirming again that reform is no substitute for a thoroughgoing revolution.

Radical
Detroit

It was exciting to go into the sports stadium in Peoria, Ill. for the rally for the Caterpillar workers, and to hear representatives from Japan, Britain, South Africa, Belgium and France. You got an international feeling for the labor movement. Many workers were interested in N&L precisely because we had so many international stories. It moved everyone when the speaker from the International Union of Metalworkers said that if they could win the battle against apartheid in South Africa, we ought to be able to win the battle against capital in the U.S.

Secretary
Chicago

Lou Turner's article "What next in South Africa?" was both informative and balanced. By informative I mean that he presented more than one dimension of the struggle in South Africa—in youth, Black workers, capital and the Left. By balanced, I mean that his story lacked both the uncritical, rhetorical "line" of many leftist papers and the narrow half truths of the bourgeois media. Mandela, the ANC, Black workers and the Left should neither be supported uncritically nor dismissed out of hand as "dupes" of South African capital. The revolutionary dimensions and the contradictions within each sector should be looked at and analyzed as objectively as possible. That is what I thought Turner's article did.

R.W.
Chicago

In your appeal for help in the May News & Letters you write that the "question is whether that can bring the movement for freedom to daylight without us confronting the task of projecting a pathway out of today's darkness." The truth of that was shown by Turner when he acknowledges the endless revolt, which as he says, "walked in the shadow of massacre." But in asking the question, "What next in South Africa?" Turner shows the answer by no means rests only on the shoulders of the masses fighting for freedom. In writing of the meaning of the election there he reveals that the most dangerous trap is "the philosophic void at the center of the movement." That's the void that must be filled to see to it that the darkness of

today's events ends up being the darkness before the dawn. No one else seems to be doing this but you. Here is my donation to help keep News & Letters going!

Women's liberationist
Illinois

ENVIRONMENTAL STRUGGLES



The protests that were seen last summer, led by environmentalists and Native Americans against British Columbia's decision to allow clearcut logging of two-thirds of the big tree forest on Vancouver Island, are not over. More actions are planned for this summer. A Native American participant told me: "Forty years after old-growth rainforest is clearcut nothing grows there. And those trees are cut not for beautiful furniture, but for pulp! Loggers don't realize that when the forest is gone in two to five years, their jobs will be gone, too. We are at a critical stage. If we wait, there won't be anything left. The logging companies have surveillance teams that are really commando units to harass people they suspect are environmentalists. This is not on private land, but the National Forest!"

Readers who want more information on actions planned this summer can contact Friends of Clayoquot Sound through Western Canada Wilderness Committee, 20 Water Street, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6B 1A4.

Susan Van Gelder
Michigan

The Winnipeg Greens are pleased to announce that Green political activist, Nick Ternette, has published "The Rise and Fall of the Left in Canada." Ternette examines the relationships between the popular movements (Women's Movement, Peace, Environment, etc.) and Canada's Left. He provides an insightful analysis of the failure of the Left in Canada, and with the fall of the Communist Party of Canada, takes a serious look into the future of the Left from an Eco-Socialist perspective. The book is available by sending \$5.00 to:

The Winnipeg Greens
158 Evanson Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 2A3

I have sent Franklin Dmitryev's essay article, "Marx's humanism in today's environmental debates" (April N&L) to several environmentalists, including the author of "Texaco: Destroying the Ecuadorian Rainforest" in the War Resisters League journal Nonviolent Activist. As a result of petroleum companies spilling an estimated 19,000,000 gallons of toxic waste affecting six native nations, one nation is facing extinction. The WRL article bemoans this havoc wrought on indigenous peoples.

The question is whether Dmitryev's reflections about Marx's body of ideas—"What kind of development is truly human and not just the self expansion of capital?"—can move "reformism" to revolutionary development.

Sheila
New York

BOSNIA AND RWANDA—MASSACRE'S MESSAGE

Oxfam workers were eyewitness to one of the worst massacres in Rwanda where the victims were Tutsis, killed by a chauvinist Hutu faction. While foreign development workers have mostly been evacuated, Rwandans working for the same agencies are not allowed by the army to leave and have to go into hiding. Meanwhile the media is obsessed with the evacuation of white Europeans while Rwandan development and human rights activists are in the most danger.

Activist
Oxford

I liked the News & Letters pamphlet

Readers' Views

on Bosnia. On the question of the U.S.'s betrayal of the people of Bosnia, I can't even imagine that the U.S. is doing anything unless it profits capitalism. I don't see a bright future for the masses of East Europe with the current difficult economic crises and political chaos. What I think can be effective is the pressure of public opinion on U.S. policy to change it to some extent. This is exactly what has to be increased with publications, pamphlets and conferences.

Reader
Los Angeles

Your May 1994 editorial on Bosnia was right on target. It seems to me the rulers need to prove their power to the world, and at the same time are constrained by economic weakness at home. But whether they argue for or against intervention in situations like those in Bosnia and Rwanda, the message is still that the masses are powerless to do anything. Everything is supposedly in the hands of the rulers and/or evil, immutable human nature. So they hide the causes of genocide by reducing them to old ethnic or religious rivalries. Which is why your call for grassroots aid initiatives combined with dialogue on ideas of freedom is so important.

F.B.
Chicago

BIGGEST GANG

When Detroit Police Officers Rico Hardy and Ira Todd were found "not guilty" of murdering an unarmed Cuban immigrant, Jose Iturralde, outside a Southwest Detroit bar in April 1993, the media played up the jubilation among the officers' families, but it could not ignore the widespread anger and protest in Detroit's Latino community, whose efforts had resulted in keeping the case in the open.

Unlike the white officers who beat Malice Green (a Black man) to death two years ago, Todd and Hardy, formerly assigned to the Gang Squad, were not immediately suspended from the force. It took four months until they were suspended and charged in Iturralde's death. And they were cleared of department charges on the day jury selection began. Other events in the case disturbed many residents of Southwest Detroit who often say that the Gang Squad is the biggest gang in the area.

Angry
Detroit

WOMEN'S LIBERATION WORLDWIDE



Information such as we get in N&L is hard to come by here in Namibia. We hope to have reading evenings this year and the articles in N&L will really stimulate debate. Your newspaper form and reporting style facilitates easy understanding. The news from all over makes it easier to see how other people work for change. It will be especially important to have contact with socialists in South Africa this year to gain a perspective of what is going on.

Sister Namibia Collective
Windhoek

The conference held here in India recently on "Women and AIDS" was to see in which way women are particularly affected and also "accused" by society of carrying the HIV virus. Specifically sex workers are seen as carriers when in reality they are "most at risk."

The issue that is very much on the table these days in women's circles here is population, as preparation for the UN conference in Cairo. The main issue is to highlight how population growth in the North is a far greater danger due to the high levels of per capita consumption, than population growth in the South. Also discussed is how women's reproductive rights are being trampled in the name of population problems. Population policy is seen as racist, sexist and classist. In India there is a reduction of

maternity benefits to only two children. Also, people with more than two children are disqualified to stand for elections.

Pilar
India

There were all sorts of International Women's Day activities on both sides of the border separating Israel from the occupied territories, although there has been very little cooperative activity between both sides, even on "neutral" issues such as women's issues. We do believe that Palestinian women will attend the international conference of Women in Black and women's peace movements to be held at the end of the year. Sadly, the vigils in Israel are now down to two regulars, in Tel Aviv and Kibbutz Nachshon, and one irregular in Jerusalem. Thanks for sending the pamphlet of Raya Dunayevskaya's writings on the Middle East. I find N&L very informative and am glad I have a subscription.

Gila Svirsky
Jerusalem

YOUTH AND THE FUTURE

Youth today are a difficult subject to write about. Bourgeois society is trying to foist off as reality that youth are criminals and it's important not to begin any discussion on that ground, even to refute it. The April lead on this subject was excellent in that it did not set out to prove any preconceived notion, but opened a lot of questions. It's true that youth don't have a relation to the discipline of a factory clock—that's how they know they don't have any future in this capitalist world. That's their determinant for a totally different future.

Librarian
Detroit

The story of the Chicago teacher who gave his sixth grade students a math test that included questions on drugs, guns and prostitution—on the assumption that they would respond to it better that way!—has been picked up by the national press because the angry parents and children are demanding the teacher be fired. A young new teacher I know said the situation is even worse than this one incident. This "test" has evidently been circulated among teachers for a long while and was supposed to be a "joke"—and it's not the only one that had gone around. It is a sign of how deep the racism and sexism is that the kids have to put up with today.

Ready for some changes
Chicago

It's pretty scary to think that the rulers are getting off the hook by just locking people up and 20 years from now if they have the same problems they'll think of something worse. How can you even think there will be a future? Youth turn to gangs because they don't see any future for themselves.

Teenager
San Francisco

WHY SUPPORT N&L?

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Anti-imperialists
Malta

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DIALECTICS OF LABOR, LABOR OF DIALECTICS

When I read Raya Dunayevskaya's 1949 letter, which you called "The dialectics of labor, and the labor of dialectics" (May N&L), I thought of what a Black worker once said about needing to "have your ears to the rail to hear the train coming." I think that was what she was digging for in that letter. But she is saying that for that you not only have to hear well what comes from below but go so deeply into the dialectic of capitalism that you can anticipate the something new that is coming. To me, she's delving into what is the role of intellectuals before the revolt comes.

Mitch
Bay Area

I'm glad N&L is publishing some of the Dunayevskaya-James-Lee correspondence. This is an area sorely neglected by the Left, and should be more timely now than ever. But it has been glossed over in most books I've read on Left history, whether by vulgar propagandists like Alex Callinicos in his *Trotskyism*, or even serious Left scholars like Alan Wald in his *The New York Intellectuals*, who simply says that Dunayevskaya and James had "a falling out."

At a time when so many are wondering what revolution has meant, and can still mean today—and when there is such a debate going on about forms of organization, democracy, etc.—the profound questioning which is seen in the letter by Dunayevskaya published in the May issue should be an inspiration.

Gerard Emmett
Chicago

Raya Dunayevskaya's 1949 letter reprinted in the May N&L, speaks to an issue that is only now coming to the surface among capitalist ideologues—the source of innovation in capitalist production. In the age of Taylorism—dumbing down the work process into repeatable fragments requiring little training—Dunayevskaya saw that "the history of technology could show it was not great men who discovered, but great masses."

Today Taylorism is rejected and the

very survival of a capitalist organization is based on finding ways to get workers to share their creativity in the service of capitalist production. Marx spoke of the constant revolutions in capitalist production, forcing retraining and learning multiple skills, as creating the total individual. But this is not the same as the "whole worker" that ideologues speak of "empowering" today. They only know the worker as the source of concrete knowledge and its application which they want to use. Peter Drucker crystallizes this new view in *Post-Capitalist Society* where he claims "All knowledges are equally valuable" as long as they are in the service of the pre-eminent social substance, "productivity." There is nothing "post" capitalist about this. It is only the conscious recognition that capitalism sees no intrinsic value in any particular knowledge.

Reader
Oakland

In the August 30, 1949, letter by Raya Dunayevskaya (May N&L), she discusses Lenin's enthrallment with the relationship of the concrete to the abstract in 1914. An earlier letter by her, June 20, 1949, quotes Lenin: "((THE ABSTRACT IN THE FOREGROUND, THE CONCRETE OBSCURED!!!)) NOT A BENE! EXCELLENT! THAT'S THE MAIN THING! NB" (microfilm #1644, *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*). This indicated that, by the editors adding the word "labor" to her comment on "concrete vs. abstract" in the published letter, unintended meaning seems to have been introduced.

By the way, Dunayevskaya's choice of a quote from Hegel—"The battle of reason is the struggle to break up the rigidity to which the understanding has reduced everything"—can be found in Hegel's *Logic* (from the *Encyclopedia*), paragraph 32.

Reader
Chicago

In Dunayevskaya's letter, I was intrigued by Hegel's critique of empiricism for transforming the concrete into an abstraction. It reminded me of a pair of

newspaper articles I read last August. The *Detroit Free Press* reported that "women endured the recession better than men and posted gains in both pay and jobs," while the *Chicago Sun-Times* contended that "this time around, more of the laid-off workers are women."

One source of such contradictory "facts" is their reliance upon statistical averages. While purportedly giving us a snapshot of what exists, an average in fact collapses all individuality into its very opposite, a generality—which is, strictly speaking, a snapshot of what does not exist: the "average woman" or "average worker." Economics, that most empirical science, in this way often reveals itself not as an objective science but merely as a form of sophistry, demonstrated precisely by its capacity to "prove" the contentions of every faction.

Jan Kollwitz
Illinois



LABOR STRUGGLES TODAY

There are 10,000 women and men janitors in Chicago fighting to get equal pay so our kids and us don't end up in the newspapers doing stupid things. Some workers say, "Why should we go to a demonstration? They harass us at work. The media isn't covering us, so what's the point?" They are supposed to report news, but they don't cover our demonstrations, even when we have as many as 4,000 people. They don't cover us because we clean their offices! We are there because we know they think, "We got you," but we know we got them.

Woman janitor
Chicago

My father worked at Caterpillar in Peoria, and so did my wife's father. We were "Cat brats," as they say. Instead of working at Caterpillar, I got a job in a print shop when I was 18, and my wife works in a garment factory. I worked at

that print shop for 26 years, and got injured four times. So finally I decided to get out of there and got a job selling cars. Now I'm putting in 12 and 13 hour days, but nobody is buying cars. Everyone is worried that there is going to be a strike, or they'll be locked out, so people are just running their cars into the ground. So here I am trying to make something more of myself, and I'm not making any money. The whole area is now totally depressed because of Caterpillar.

Car salesman
Peoria, Illinois

TWO-TIER HEALTH CARE?

Clinton's health care reform isn't going to change what we've got now—two health care systems. The one for workers isn't much different from what we have to put up with at work. The health clinic which we have to go to is run by several Chicago unions. The way they run it makes you feel like you're on an assembly line. When I was pregnant, I went in for tests. I had to be there from 9:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. on a weekday. When I wasn't in a waiting area, I was sent from one person to another and another the whole time. When I was about to give birth, my water was breaking and I had to drive all the way from the north side of the city to the Mount Sinai hospital on the south side where my health plan required me to go!

Building janitor
Chicago

A NOTE TO OUR READERS

Readers who would like to contact Andrea Gibbs about her prisoner rights work or about support for Camp Sister Spirit in Mississippi can write to her at *The Victims' Voice*, P.O. Box 6741, Gulfport, MS 39506. She is the deputy sheriff fired two years ago for protesting mistreatment of prisoners. See the story about her in the May N&L, p. 8 and her Reader's View in the same issue, p. 7.

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Black/Red View

by John Alan

After much publicized political pressure from liberals in Congress, the deposing of Haitian President Jean Bertrand Aristide and the embarrassing failure of the oil embargo to bring down the Haitian military regime, President Clinton is now contemplating a military intervention into what is virtually an unannounced civil war between the Haitian masses and the military government of General Raoul Cedras.

If a U.S. military intervention does occur, it doesn't mean that the Clinton administration has departed radically from the policy of the Bush administration. Both administrations have essentially pursued an identical policy of containing a real revolution in Haiti. Both administrations have refused to give refugee status to the thousands of Black Haitians seeking asylum in the U.S. to escape the brutalities of the Haitian military dictatorship. Both Clinton and Bush have feared to challenge the intrinsic racism in American society.

The Haitian military commander, General Raoul Cedras, clearly understands how race and class effectively shape U.S. policy toward the Haitian crisis; how it reduces all political rhetoric about human rights to a farce. Thus in his political game with Clinton, Cedras appoints the 81-year-old judge Emil Jonassaint as the new puppet provisional president of Haiti. And Clinton rents a Ukrainian cruise ship to process Haitian refugees at sea to determine whether they qualify as refugees.

It would be foolish to think that sending U.S. military forces to Haiti is going to end the war between the Haitian masses on one side and the military and the Haitian elite on the other. U.S. economic interests in the Caribbean/Central American region need internal dictatorial military forces to control the peasants and workers of those poverty stricken countries so that they can be "peacefully" exploited by U.S. entrepreneurs paying 10 to 14 cents per hour for piece work assembly labor.

The Haitian army was created, trained and armed by the U.S. to perform the role of a policeman over the Haitian masses, and it has dutifully performed that role even during this present hassle with Clinton.

NATURE OF THE HAITIAN MILITARY

The inherent nature and the future of the Haitian army has never been discussed in public either by Clinton or Aristide. There seems to be an unwillingness to condemn the army as a politically repressive organization. Aristide himself has only demanded that those in the Haitian army and in the police who committed crimes should be punished. In this case, to demand only the punishment of those who are proven guilty absolves a repressive organization by closing one's eyes to the history of the Haitian military. Since that army was organized by the U.S. Marines in 1915, it has fought, killed and maimed only Haitians; and, as a military/political organization, it has placed presidents in office and assassi-

Haitians—between U.S. and military

nated or removed those presidents of whom it disapproved. The latter was the fate of Aristide.

However, the Haitian army is the instrument not the main source of terror in Haiti. The 79 years of domination of Haitian life by indirect U.S. imperialism is. Thus the unspoken, but crucial, question is: can the Haitian masses ever be liberated without a radical change in Haiti's relationship with the U.S.? Aristide's surprising electoral victory and his brief presidency challenged the Haitian elite and was indirectly a step toward self-determination and away from U.S. economic and political domination. Both Clinton and Bush were aware of this and after Aristide's ouster they imposed a phony oil embargo, hoping Cedras would negotiate.

The Haitian issue might have disappeared from U.S. politics if the suffering Haitian poor were not so determined in their efforts to come to Florida and Aristide was not so adamant in his claims as the constitutional President of Haiti. These two facts gained wide-spread support for Aristide among liberals and African Americans—the kind of support Clinton can't ignore. But how Clinton will attempt to satisfy Aristide's support within the limits of U.S. imperial interest in the Caribbean is another question.

HAITIAN MASSES DESIRE FREEDOM

Of course we can't expect that poor Black Haitians can alone, at this moment in history, change the course of human development in the Caribbean region by effectively opposing the will and the might of the "Colossus to the North." But these poor boat people are expressing an idea that we can hear from the masses of people in Central and South America: "human life must become more human!" This single idea has permeated the entire history of Haiti ever since the Haitian slave revolt in 1791.

The lasting historic significance of the Haitian slave revolution is that it went beyond the American Revolution, which was limited to political freedom from Europe, to a social revolution which radically changed all social relationships based on plantation economy. The tragic suffering of the Haitian masses has been the historic denial of the new kind of human society they were attempting to achieve. But the idea of how to concretize that society remains alive to the extent that they are prepared to die for it.

'No Jobs, No Peace!'

Chicago—It is May 14, a Saturday afternoon. Two hundred unemployed, angry Black construction workers circle the sidewalks and streets. Chants of "No Jobs, No Peace!" drown out a police sergeant's commands, echoing under the cavernous McCormick Place extension. Hostile stares and perplexed glances come from the virtually all-white attendees to the National Restaurant Association's (NRA) 1994 convention.

The Black workers—laborers, electricians, carpenters, painters—are members of United Services and have come to protest the lack of hiring of Black construction workers in Chicago. "You can go to McCormick Place and other construction sites and not see one Black face," said Eddie Read, the president of United Services. According to Read, the construction companies on the new \$1 billion McCormick Place project do not have the 30% Black workers mandated by law.

United Services, formed three years ago, fights against the racist practices in the construction industry. It negotiated an agreement with the Chicago Transit Authority to set aside 4,000 of 7,000 construction jobs for minorities on the Green Line elevated train renovation. And on this day they are joined by a representative from the Chicago Coalition of the Homeless (CCH) to put forth a proposal to the NRA that it come up with a plan to feed the homeless. They gather in front of the cameras from ChicagoLand TV and speak of dislocations brought on by advances in capitalism. "Because of the changes brought on by the Information Age, many of our people are homeless. We're not lazy," says a CCH spokesperson.

The demonstrators march for close to four hours in front of McCormick Place. They pass out informational leaflets and engage the few conventioners who would listen in discussions about their cause.

The police, initially caught off guard by the protest, bring in reinforcements. A sergeant tells Read and the other demonstrators that they're on private property and must leave. Undeterred, the protesters continue to march. "If We Don't Work, Nobody Works," is chanted in rhythmic unison. They walk in a huge circle in front of the annex blocking traffic for blocks.

The mood of the demonstrators rises as they receive affirmations of approval from other workers: thumbs up signs and nods of approval from passing cabbies and bus drivers, a raised fist from a Black construction worker pouring cement. One Black construction worker who got a \$19 an hour job through United Services expressed his sentiments this way: "I got a job, but that don't stop me coming out here. It's a lot of brothers need jobs."

—RW

Black World

(continued from page 1)

ization, the 1959 Hutu "revolution" that led to independence in 1962 has remained unfinished. It enfranchised a Hutu middle class while leaving the social inequality of the Hutu peasantry, in this most densely populated country in Africa, untouched.

As against the tiresome repetition of the "Marxist" formula that the atrocities are an expression of some kind of peasant terrorism, or the Western liberal view that reduces the savagery to "ancient ethnic conflicts," Marx's formulation in the 18th Drumaire comes closer to the complex truth of Rwanda, namely, that "The centralization of the state that modern society requires arises only on the remains of the military-bureaucratic government machinery which was forged in opposition to feudalism." In Rwanda, as in much of post-independence Africa, the centralization of state power by the Hutu elite did not arise on the ruins but alongside of the "military-bureaucratic government machinery which was forged in opposition to feudalism." That machinery remains intact and has been extended with the paramilitary Interahamwe as the regime's despotic instrument against both Tutsi and Hutu.

Habyarimana's political party, the National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development (MRND) is augmented by the extremist Hutu Committee for the Defense of the Republic (CDR). Both parties formed militias, armed and supplied by the army, in response to the RPF incursions from their bases in neighboring Uganda. The RPF's relationship to Ugandan President Museveni dates back to its military support for the armed struggle that brought him to power.

A 1993 Africa Watch human rights report concluded that the MRND Interahamwe and the youth wing militia of the CDR were responsible for most of the civilian deaths over the three year period (1990-93) leading up to the Arusha Peace Accords signed in Tanzania in 1993. The UN-sponsored Accords served as a screen for Habyarimana to increase the troop strength of the army from 5,000 to 30,000. Habyarimana's displeasure with the Accords, that sought to undermine, had less to do with Tutsi-Hutu "ethnic conflict" than with the prospect that a multiparty system with opposition Hutu parties, the largest being the Democratic Republican Movement (MDR), would spell the end of his power.

Thus, insofar as there is an ethnic basis to the Rwandan crisis, it is as much an intra-Hutu conflict between members of Habyarimana's northwest Hutus and members of the southern Hutu. As Lindsey Hilum, writing in *Africa Report* (May-June 1994), observed: "The traditional north-south divide between Hutus was as important as the tribal division" (p. 15).

In response to the government's radio diatribes against ethnic and political enemies, the RPF, for its part, encouraged violence against the ruling elite in its own radio broadcasts. Both sides continued the arming

'AfterCulture: Detroit'

AfterCulture: Detroit and the Humiliation of History, by Jerry Herron (Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1993), 216 pp.

AfterCulture: Detroit... is a collection of essays about Detroit on the general theme that it has transformed from a "narrative city" to a decontextualized "space." The author passes through a number of intriguing vignettes and anecdotes to illustrate this. But the narrative of the book itself is an abstract one, a narrative without people. Herron is fixed on the Signs of the city: its objects, its relics, its artifacts, not the city itself, which is its people.

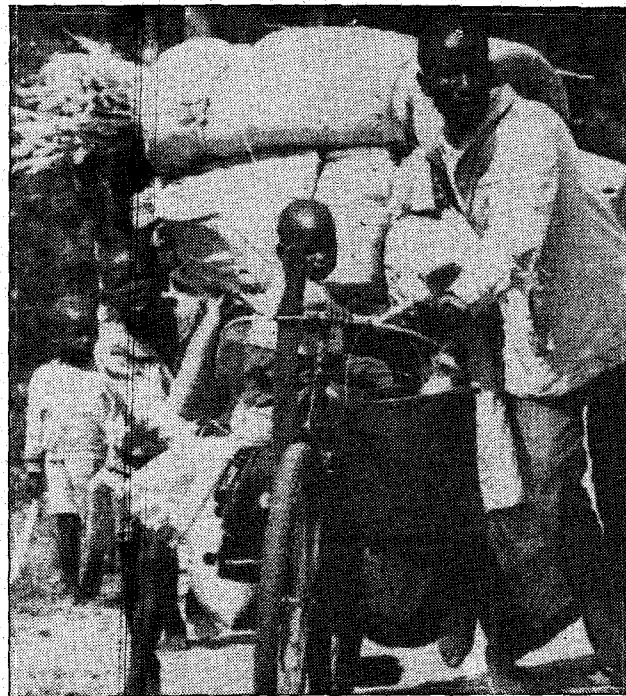
The workers' and Black struggles, which are the real stuff of Detroit's history, are not present in his book. He thinks that the decline of Detroit is a problem with culture, as if there were nothing at all wrong with capitalism, and the racism which has utterly devastated the city gets very little direct mention. But Detroit didn't come apart because the people there got their semiotics all screwed up, but because of capitalism and crippling racism. And it started long before the 1980s; Reaganism was just the final blow. At one point Herron even talks about the production line as a democratizing influence. For me it was just dehumanizing, not democratizing!

This is not to write the book off, however. It is still immensely entertaining, and as literature it ranks pretty high. Herron may miss the forest for the trees, but he sure knows a few of the trees. For one thing he unmasks the nothingness of middle-class "consciousness" and relates it to its ahistorical character, and indirectly reveals the falseness of the belief that middle-income (formerly many industrial workers) means middle-class.

Most important is the fact that he wants to talk about narrative, which means talking about history, and this is what makes the book genuinely valuable. Ultimately, the physical destruction of a city and its objects, and this city is Detroit, is a way of rewriting history. And to rewrite history means to remove the Idea of freedom from it, the living human beings who struggled for it; for history is the proof of the ability of freedom to exist. Herron has helped reopen and stimulate this discussion of history, and for this reason, *AfterCulture: Detroit*... is on a lot higher level than the utterances ("outrances?")—there's a postmodern pun) of these silly postmodernists like Derrida and Baudrillard. All said and done, it's still highly recommended reading as I see it.

And this isn't any "end of history"—the next part of the narrative for Detroit may well be Revolution!

—Former Detroit tire-builder



Rwandan refugees fleeing Kigali.

of their supporters in the months leading up to the April crisis. In October 1993, some 300,000 Hutu refugees had fled from neighboring Burundi following massacres by the Tutsi-dominated army. With stories of Tutsi atrocities in Burundi circulated by Habyarimana's forces to frighten Rwandan Hutus into thinking that the same would happen should the Tutsi be allowed into the government, tensions escalated in the Rwandan capital of Kigali to their April 6 climax.

The role of the Western powers—the U.S. who provided military aid to the government; Belgium who as the former colonial power brokered the Arusha Accords; and France who supported Habyarimana in part because he is a friend of French President Mitterand's family—has been reprehensible. France in particular had bolstered the despotic Habyarimana regime and secretly armed it.

However, the complicity of the UNAMIR (United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda) stands out from all the rest. Restricted by the bureaucratic mandate of the UN, the 2,500-strong UNAMIR peace-keeping force stood impotently outside government roadblocks while the mass slaughter of civilians ensued. Indeed, the UNAMIR forces withdrew to their barracks at the height of the massacres, and was ineffectual even when it came to protecting the lives of the UN staff.

Thus, the moral outrage of UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali's condemnation of the "world community" for its failure to respond to the Rwanda crisis is as hollow as Clinton's prevarications. In the end, the UN and the West only intends to reposition the same diplomatic screen that has historically served its effacement of genocide in Africa. The question before Africa is: Can it do otherwise?

Essay Article

by Victor Hart

The theoretical ground staked out by Jürgen Habermas over the course of two decades had as one of its central results, if not presupposition, the notion that revolution was not among the significant problems of modern societies. Yet, those familiar with his work cannot but wonder at how this result has been coupled with his constant returns to Marx's philosophy of revolution.

I. HABERMAS AND THE EAST EUROPEAN REVOLUTIONS

In the 1980s and 1990s, Jürgen Habermas' "Critical Theory" has had to respond to the revolutions which swept Communism from power in Eastern Europe. "What Does Socialism Mean Today? The Rectifying Revolution and the Need for New Thinking," Habermas' major article analyzing those world-historic events, was first published in German in 1990, followed rapidly by an English translation the same year for *New Left Review* (Sept.-Oct. 1990). The article appeared in the wake of mass uprisings in the former Czechoslovakia and East Germany, as well as Romania, but before the August 1991 hard-line coup attempt against Mikhail Gorbachev which set in motion the chain of events that culminated in the collapse of the Russian Communist Party. Moreover, the article was unusual because it was straightforwardly political, and not Habermas' usual level of abstract discourse.

Clearly written for those independent radical activists in search of a theory to give meaning to the widely unexpected, world-historical developments of the last decade, it might be argued that the major thesis of Habermas' "Rectifying Revolution" (RR) article is that the Left, not the appearance of a postmodern world or right-wing anti-Communism, was responsible for the upheavals sweeping Eastern Europe.

As we will see, Habermas' aim was not only to analyze the meaning of these events with a view of their theoretical ramifications for the Left, but to offer a supposedly conclusive critique of Marxism, beginning with Marx. The aim clearly is to show that his own theory, developed over the last two decades, offers a viable or even essential alternative to Marx and Marxism; that it carries the potential for a new unity of theory and practice demanded by a developing world situation.

Comparing the theoretical perspectives of Raya Dunayevskaya with those of Jürgen Habermas, as both, from very different vantage points, anticipated the world-historical changes in Eastern Europe, allows us to test the viability of Habermas' alternative. In order to do this we must begin at the beginning, with Marx.

II. 'MODERNITY' AND THE SUBSUMPTION OF LABOR

Habermas uses his 1990 article on "Rectifying Revolution" to press a point that concluded his *Theory of Communicative Action, Lifeworld and System: Critique of Functionalist Reason*. In the final pages of that work he cites a long passage from Marx's 1857 *Grundrisse* where Marx explains the "difficult and great" transition from Adam Smith in arriving at a concept of wealth-creating activity in general, the universality of labor. However, underlying this discovery, Marx says, is the emergence of a form of society (and here Marx offers as an example the U.S.) in which indifference toward specific labors has become a practical truth. As wealth-producing activity in general, labor has "ceased to be organically linked with particular individuals in any specific form," and therefore their own concrete life activity has become "a matter of chance and hence of indifference" (pp. 104-05).

Habermas assigns to Marx's insight the place of a "special case" in his general theory of communicative action where labor, now ruled by an abstraction, is seen as removed from the self-activity of the workers and placed under the systemic imperatives of economy and administration. Even if we ignore how Habermas has for nearly two decades found original ways, through references to the *Grundrisse*, to reconcile Marx with his own theory, it is the origin and present form of automated production which is now of theoretical interest.

Raya Dunayevskaya begins her 1986 contribution to the journal *Praxis International* by recalling the development of "high-tech" from World War II directly into production. In the U.S., the 1949-50 Miners' General Strike was fought not only over unemployment and the demand for better wages but raised the question—what kind of labor should people do; why is there such a gulf between thinking and doing? (See "A Post-World War II View of Marx's Humanism, 1843-1883; Marxist Humanism in the 1950s and '80s," *Praxis International*, October 1988, p. 360.)

Habermas, on the other hand, purports to show, in addition to the subsumption of labor, how today's loosening from traditional contexts of a whole range of social actions compels the task of actualizing the implicit universality of everyday communication "oriented to reaching understanding." Modernity's selective expansion of only one aspect of reason (called purposive-rational, following Max Weber) is expressed in the development of autonomous sub-systems "steered" by money and power. They intrude into or distort the communicative process of everyday life whose own rationalization is dependent upon speech "oriented to reaching understanding."

In the spontaneous revolts in Eastern Europe, where "no future-oriented ideas" (RR, p. 5) emerged, both the theoretical concepts of the activist-leaders and the inaccessibility of a lifeworld absorbed by the "state socialist" system led to an immediate outcome which confirmed for Habermas that modernization is an ongoing rationalization process.

Though developed capitalist societies bear little resemblance

to the Manchester misery described by Engels, Marx's insight, that a civilization which blinds itself to anything which cannot be expressed by a price bears the seeds of its own destruction, is still valid. While "capital scrambles into markets corroded by state socialism in search of investment opportunities," former "state socialist" countries risk becoming the modern Manchesters.



In Poland, a recent protest against post-Communist austerity reflects back on the shortcomings of the 1980s "self-limiting revolution" against the Communist Party, and underscores the need for a break with all theories which stop short of Marx's concept of "revolution-in-permanence."

However, the real object of Habermas' attack in his article on East Europe is the idea of socialism of Marx's "romantic, speculative...Paris Manuscripts" (RR, p. 15), especially the notion of alienation and the vision of its transcendence. Habermas has long held that Marx himself had jettisoned the early concept of alienation when he developed his labor theory of value.

Early industrialism with its image of small craftsmen lent plausibility to the view that labor contained the potentiality of reunifying a modern world torn asunder. However, the actual development of the contemporary world led Western Marxism to conceive of labor's incorporation into "the totally administered world," thus making implausible the early Marx's notion of a future "dominated by industrial labor" which would overcome alienation and fragmentation.

Instead Habermas takes the Kantian idea (developed by Weber) of modernity divided into separate cultural spheres of science, morality and art, which follow an autonomous logic. The "philosophy of consciousness" from Kant to Marx, according to this view, is an exhausted paradigm, incapable of evoking the universal dimension which gives meaning in an increasingly rationalized world.

III. HABERMAS' 'RECTIFICATION' OF MARX

Habermas holds that Marx's theory essentially aims at laying bare the development of the forces of production as a natural law. In this regard Habermas singles out Marx's "Critique of the Gotha Program" as having historically had the most serious practical consequences. In that work Marx is supposed to have "instrumentalized" constitutional democracy by viewing it as the final form of the state in bourgeois society while allegedly failing to specify how freedom would be institutionalized. Habermas writes that like Marx's earlier critique of Hegel's doctrine of the state, his view was that freedom consisted solely in converting the state from an organ superimposed on society into one thoroughly subordinate to it. "The illusion of an 'administration of things,'" writes Habermas, "reduces the expectation of the need for a democratic forum for resolving conflicts to such an extent that the spontaneous self-organization of the people appears to be sufficient" (RR, p. 12).

Against this background Habermas confronts the "non-communist Left" with their ideas of workers' self-management and democratic socialization of the means of production. If the Left today has sought a "Middle Way" between capitalism "curbed by the welfare state and state socialism" through revolutionizing East European society, it has surely failed. For the Left has not caught the implicit universals of modernity: separated-out market economies and administrative systems, as well as the need for new non-institutional "public spheres" of communication that are integral to the lifeworld in which a diversity of values can be arrived.

Habermas had been active on the East European scene as early as his 1957 "Literaturbericht zur philosophischen Diskussion um Marx und den Marxismus" ("Report on the Literature Concerning the Philosophical Discussion about Marx and Marxism"). The article takes up a wide range of European literature discussing Marx's early work, including the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, which were receiving renewed worldwide attention two decades after they had been "discovered" a half-century after Marx's death. In the *Literaturbericht*, Habermas, following Marcuse's pioneering review of 1932 when the 1844 *Manuscripts* had just been published, characterizes Marx's thought as a philosophy of history and of revolution, a revolutionary humanism rooted in the analysis of alienation whose intention is to change social relations in order to overcome alienation. Tom Rockmore's *Habermas and Historical Materialism* (1989) characterized the *Literaturbericht*, a work which has never been translated and published in English, as "the first phase of what is arguably one of the major readings of historical materialism in our time" (p. 31).

By contrast, with his jettisoning of the Hegel-Marx di-

alectic, which originally coincided with the availability of his major theoretical work in English, it is significant that Habermas' 1990 political-theoretical article on East Europe so rapidly found an English-language forum. The 1971 English translation of his 1963 *Theorie und Praxis* (TP), containing "Between Science and Philosophy: Marxism as Critique," was substantially altered by the additions of two footnotes: one rejecting the concept of a revolutionary subject, the other calling for a replacement for the Hegelian-Marxian concept of totality. His "Rectifying Revolution" cited this English version for those interested in whether "Marxism as critique" had become as exhausted as "actually existing socialism." The introduction to *Theory and Practice* contains the peculiar observation: "We no longer find, in dialectical logic, as in a certain way Marx still did, the normative basis for a social theory constructed with practical intent" (p. 16).

This is said in response to critics of Habermas' 1968 *Knowledge and Human Interests*, which contained his most philosophical assessment of Marx, such as Oskar Negt who charged that Habermas' notion of humanity's "quasi-transcendental" interest in emancipation had not "pose[d] the question of organization" (TP, p. 15).¹

Marx's critique of political economy is, in turn, reduced to a critique of ideology, one aimed at showing that democracy cannot be realized in its bourgeois form. Yet, Habermas says, Marx at the same time opposed any "undisguised" recantation of bourgeois ideals. Although Habermas ambiguously refrains from linking Marx directly to the theory of organization he describes as having moved logically from Lenin through Lukacs to Stalin, his reduction of Marx's critique of political economy to securing the practical elements of critique, which supposedly "Marx gave to the Communists," results precisely in such a linkage. "From this," writes Habermas, "the Communist Party developed" (TP, p. 27).

Further, he implies that the foundation for the interpretation of Marx's concept of organization was laid in a dialectical logic based in the "philosophy of history" of both Hegel and Marx. In his reference to making "critique practical," Habermas imputes to Marx the concept of an inevitable triumph of the proletariat as a "macro-subject." From this, he says, the organizational practice of Marxism developed.

IV. HABERMASIAN ORIGIN OF 'SELF-LIMITING REVOLUTION'

Finally, Habermas reassures us that in his "ambivalence" Marx made distinctions in his practice of critique in which, it is alleged, recognized situations wherein "initiatives of radical reformism" are more promising than the revolutionary struggle based solely on labor and a philosophy of history. Regarding today, Habermas writes that "In the face of various sectarian enterprises one might point out...that in advanced capitalism changing the general structure of education might possibly be more important...than the ineffectual training of cadres or the building of impotent parties" (TP, pp. 31-32).

What remains after all of this is a bare Habermasian conception of the contemporary possibilities of a unity of theory and practice through the development of public spheres of dialogic relations. This notion was reflected in the concept of "self-limiting revolution" propounded by some Polish intellectuals when they disbanded KOR (Workers' Social Self-Defense Committees) in the early 1980s. At the time of KOR's liquidation, Solidarity's spontaneity included millions of workers, attracting ever new sectors of the population into the movement. The threat of a Russian invasion hung over the country. Martial law was imposed in 1981. And the concept of salvaging an autonomous "civil society" increasingly came to be viewed virtually as an absolute by some intellectuals in the movement.

Ignoring decades of mass revolt and creativity, Habermas makes the 1980s dissolution of Communism appear as having originated from above in the *perestroika* and *glasnost* of Mikhail Gorbachev, the hand-picked successor of Yuri Andropov, the career KGB administrator assigned to East European countries in the post-World War II years.²

No one could have foreseen the 1989 mass uprisings which alone made impossible the continuation of exploitative state-capitalist regimes masquerading as Marxism. A profound anticipation of these world-historic changes, one which is the very opposite of Habermas', is found in the work of Raya Dunayevskaya.

After three decades of following East European revolts from under Communist totalitarianism, Dunayevskaya, in one of her last writings, anticipated future revolutions in Eastern Europe. Yet, if these revolutions are to develop

(continued on page 10)

1. In his review of Dunayevskaya's 1973 *Philosophy and Revolution*, John O'Neill's extension of Dunayevskaya's argument to encompass such theorists as Habermas and Althusser suggest far-reaching implications for what Dunayevskaya called the "dialectics of organization and philosophy" when he writes: "...behind the complexity of Habermas and Althusser's arguments over Marxist social science there still lurks the problem of the relation between philosophy and revolution. If Marx can be separated from Hegel then revolution can be handed over to the Party or else resubjectified" (*Telos*, Winter 1974-75, p. 167).

2. See the revealing dialogue between Habermas and Adam Michnik, a founder of KOR, in the *New York Review of Books* (March 24, 1994). Besides both of them minimizing the Serbian genocidal war being carried out in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the most telling comments are Michnik's on reading Habermas during his six years in prison after martial law was proclaimed in Poland in 1981. Interesting as well is Michnik's muted critique of Habermas for his failure to adequately oppose Stalinism and for his "derisive" view of Solidarity.

Spirit of revolt beneath today's Black, Latino, labor reality

(continued from page 1)

How do we develop the concrete relationship between Black and Latino so that both remain revolutionary? The liberal and conservative elements of the Black community have reached a deadend in their power to assimilate into white society. That power to assimilate is now being handed to the Latino community. Although in Watts and South Central L.A. we live as neighbors, our children go to the same schools, and we are affected by a singular discrimination, there is a drive to segregate the two communities from each other, even as we are already isolated from the white community at large. The Latino immigrant in particular is being treated with harsh working conditions as if he or she was less than human. Black labor likewise represents less than a pack mule to the capitalist.

"The problem of America has been the need to control manual labor...Manual labor...is the basis of civilized life...In an ideal society it would be highly paid work because of its unpleasantness and necessity; and even today, no matter what we may say of the individual worker or of the laboring class, we know that the foundation of America is built on the backs of manual laborers." (W.E.B. DuBois, *The Gift of Black Folks: The Negroes in the Making of America*, p. 18.)

In the laundry company where I work, 95% of the workers are manual labor and Latino, 65% of whom are women, 3% Black and the top one percent white male. That gives a view of how racism is entrenched within the system from the government down to the work place. For example, the immediate floor supervisors are all Latino and are responsible for pushing the production of the ironers, the washroom, and soil department where speaking Spanish is a must. The top dog however is white, sitting in an air conditioned office behind a plateglass window, keeping an eye on everybody and everything coming down the line. It's obvious they see "Mexican" as stupid; one manager told me, "they can't make a decision."

The white ruler looks at the Black worker as dangerous and a threat, complaining that they won't work for \$4.35 an hour minimum wage. Yet my neighbor who is Black went to this laundry company where they had four openings, and from what I can see he was not even considered seriously for the job which he desperately needs.

While Blacks in L.A. are being excluded from employment, the Latino worker is being abused—but not without resistance. At a Huntington Park company called UniHosiery Inc. workers are striking for union recognition and at least 14 workers are suing the company supervisors for practicing pervasive sexual harassment and assault on employees. "One five-year employee said that workers were treated like animals. In one case a manager driving a fork-lift allegedly cornered a worker against a wall. Once trapped a second supervisor began to remove the employee's pants and managers left after the worker screamed for help." (LA Times, May 15, 1994)

The excuse the Korean-based company gave for these events was that it was just a joke, now that the workers, many of them not citizens, are out on strike attempting to unionize.

WHAT HAPPENED TO NEW BEGINNINGS?

What this system of race and class, separate and unequal, is headed toward in 1994 is another explosion which will split the nation in two. The L.A. rebellion was just a glimpse of what a mind will do when it is denied recognition of being whole and human; it is still eating away at the system's very root.

The greatest fear of the oppressor, whether plant foreman or police officer, is that the oppressed has a mind of his or her own. To be human, that represents the greatest threat. As Teresa Allison, founder of Mothers Reclaiming Our Children, put it at a recent meeting on the two-year anniversary of the L.A. rebellion:

"It was strange. There were about 300 of us out protesting in front of the criminal courts building in downtown L.A., trying to stop the railroading of our children into prison, when a policeman said to me that he was no longer afraid of the guns or

weapons that we might have but that 'I am afraid of what you might be thinking.' They are afraid that your mind plays a rough role in this life. We have to think, to take the streets and march because the mind is what they are afraid of."

The problem is that many within the movement past and present, labor unions, the Left, Civil Rights organizations, Black nationalist organizations have given more recognition to the force needed from the masses with which to uproot this society, or to force concessions from the state or corporations. Very few within the movement have made a category out of the mind of the oppressed.

Because the system will only single out our destructive rage and reject the creative reason which is shouting for recognition, it is the responsibility of the revolutionary Marxist to give voice to, and act upon the Idea of Freedom, so when rebellion takes place, our creative side has a forum through which to develop. This process, which we could call a look in the historic mirror, allows the subject, in particular Black labor, unemployed and employed, to experience a shock of recognition which builds confidence, not alone in the individual self, but as a self-movement, a mass movement to take control of our own destiny.

The labor unions in this country have lost those kinds of unique beginnings as the collective body of working people. Behind the voice of labor had walked the ability to shut down production at any plant that was organized. The great beginnings of the CIO in the 1930s broke the tradition of organized labor within this country as only white and skilled trades. That is what the AFL represented before a new labor movement of tremendous proportions gave recognition to the unskilled, Black and minority worker and placed this country on the verge of revolution. With those great beginnings of the CIO,

"for the first time organized labor struck where it hurt capital most, in all the basic industries—rubber, coal, steel, auto. For the first time, employed and unemployed did not work at cross purposes. On the contrary, the unemployed would often, along with another new phenomenon—women's auxiliaries—man the picket lines while the workers sat down inside. For the first time, control over the conditions of labor—the recognition [emphasis added] of the union—predominated over all other demands, even of wages. Nowhere more than in America had the capitalist outcry about 'the invasion of private property' produced a greater militancy than among the workers who insisted on sitting down at those machines they had always worked but never controlled."

(American Civilization on Trial, p. 23)

In these most concrete of beginnings for Black and organized labor, the idea of recognition took on the form of concrete, creative action at the point of production where the machine dominates the laborer. A break in thought and action was made within the production process of capital. Today the established unions, which have separated in action and thought from their rank-and-file membership, have allowed capitalist production to dominate the laborer. The labor struggle has been narrowed down to five or six workers walking a picket line, to the exclusion of the question of who controls production. The control of production by labor has been further transformed, with the help of a corporate union bureaucracy, into simplistic "input" by workers through the "team concept." The team concept is controlled and dominated by production, as a means to make the company profitable. The genuine thought of the laborer is further suppressed through the fear of joining the millions of unemployed workers who have no future of finding work in this high-tech computer era of minimum wage manual jobs.

Even when new laws that would help labor, like the striker replacement bill, are about to be implemented, they meet barriers which represent the old way of doing things. Resistance to the bill is coming from the "right-to-work" states from Tennessee to Mississippi. There, a deep layer of rebellion and organization by Black, particularly women, workers is challenging the permanent character of reaction whose roots go back to slavery.

NEED FOR MARX'S PHILOSOPHY TODAY

So the problem of today's labor movement is that it

has allowed these most creative new beginnings in struggle to be suppressed from within the very organization that was created by workers. The worker's need for philosophy demands that Marx's analysis of capitalism be seen as more than just a theory of the economic facts but as one which contains philosophic categories of struggle that allows the human spirit to breathe.

"Take the succinct way in which Marx pinpointed the situation in the Civil War at its darkest moment, as the war dragged on and the Southern generals were winning so decisively as to produce a defeatist attitude in the North. Where others looked at the military forecast, Marx looked at the forces of revolution: 'A single Negro regiment would have a remarkable effect on southern nerves...a war of this kind must be conducted along revolutionary lines...'" (Letter from Marx to Engels, August 7, 1862; *American Civilization on Trial*, p. 11)

This quote reflects Marx's critique of Lincoln, but it also implies a critique of an attitude that permeates revolutionaries today, post-Marx Marxists who see the forces of revolution as force alone and not subjects as Reason. Marx criticized the Marxists of his time in America whose attitude toward slavery was that the slave revolts were unimportant because a chattel slave would only become a wage slave. Marx's response was: If that is Marxism, I am not a Marxist.

Because reason goes unseparated from revolt, whether Black labor is employed or unemployed, Black has practically been made invisible by the state except when crime is being committed. Today the state is not very far away from a fascist "final solution" against Blacks and Latinos because they are seen as parasites living off the wealth of a society in which there will be no more economic booms that do not include the loss of many lives.

Partly in response to this growing state repression and partly in response to revolt in Mexico, thousands in L.A. came out in protest May 29 against an anti-labor California ballot initiative. "A sea of brown" with participants from the United Farm Workers, Janitors for Justice, and striking UniHosiery workers marched through downtown and into the grassy area in front of city hall. The law would bar all essential services from undocumented workers, including their children from attending public schools and all from getting emergency medical care. Worst of all, it would require state agencies to play the role of immigration cops by reporting suspected "illegal aliens."

Governor Pete Wilson is using the proposition to promote his campaign of enforced discrimination begun by Reagan. "The politicians are happy to have my people here working, but they don't have any rights," said one of the protesters. The attitude behind this law is being transmitted to all workers as benefits are cut and unions are busted.

This reflects the law of motion of capitalism which demands that profit be made at the expense of humanity. It is expansion of constant capital—machines of production—in search of a cheaper "pair of hands" to continue to feed production's "werewolf" hunger for sweated labor to create value. This law of motion has driven capitalists to create NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and to export factories to Mexico in hope of fostering a cheaper production process and finding a more easily exploited work force.

But the rebelliousness of the Mexican worker is on the rise and the Chiapas revolt of the peasants of southern Mexico has sent a signal to the U.S. with its imperialist NAFTA ambitions and with its own rebellious workers. The revolution sparked by the campesinos of Chiapas hopefully will inspire the border population of Mexicans to take up their cry for freedom. The life and death question that faces the campesinos of southern Mexico, with their struggle against the government of big land owners, is a struggle shared as well by American labor fighting NAFTA.

So the challenge facing the labor movement today is of tremendous importance to the survival of people nationally and internationally. The Idea of freedom must determine history, and human reason must guide our hand toward revolutionary action.

Essay Article

(continued from page 9)

op, it is Dunayevskaya's contention that the question of "what happens after the revolution"—the concept of second negativity so lacking in the post-World War II Left—must find its highest expression upon the philosophic ground left by Marx's 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic."

In her 1988 Praxis International article, Dunayevskaya outlines the theoretical need to 1) intensify our theoretical comprehension of Marx's 1844 Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts as the "philosophic moment" that became ground for the development of Marx's thought, including its future achievement of social concreteness; and 2) extend our comprehension of the totality of Marx's work, including his unique concept of organization as putting an end to the division between mental and manual labor.

Marx's critique of capitalist society is inseparable from his concept of revolution, a fact which cannot be evaded except through misplaced abstractions like Habermas' substitution of learning through dialogue for Marx's dialectic of philosophy and organization which is the unity of the social individual and the universal of a new society that has yet to be concretized for our age.

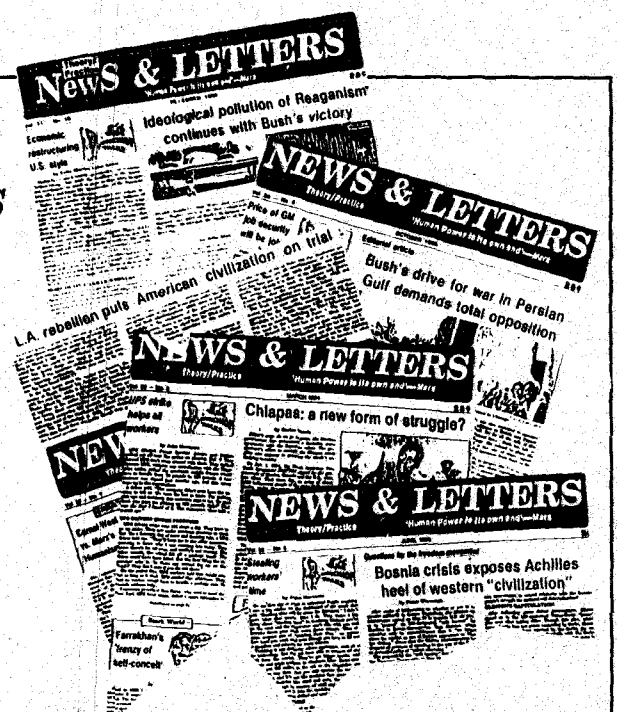
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Youth

'Minds stayed on freedom'

by Diane Lee

*Woke up this mornin' with my mind stayed on freedom,
Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah!*

—from a civil rights song

Minds Stayed on Freedom: The Civil Rights Struggle in the Rural South, by The Youth of the Rural Organizing and Cultural Center, with an Introduction by Jay MacLeod, Westview Press, 1991.

This work is so extraordinary because those who have lived through the experience of the civil rights struggle in Holmes County, Mississippi, were individually interviewed by 18 Holmes County eighth and ninth grade students in 1989. The students conducted extensive research and spent countless hours transcribing tapes, editing texts, writing introductions to each interview, taking photographs, doing illustrations, compiling a chronology of events and preparing copy for the printer. One student in a single evening, using nothing but a flashlight, produced a 43-page transcription the next day for editing. The students came up with provocative, insightful questions about the movement and on the meaning it gives us today.

In their preface to this work, the youth express what the title of this book means to them:

"Our title comes from a freedom song that was used to make black people in struggle unite and become stronger. That's also what happened to us as we struggled over fourteen months to make this book—we united and got stronger. We also became prouder and prouder: proud of the way our people fought for their natural rights and proud of ourselves for capturing that history for all to read and learn from."

The introduction, written by the students' advisor Jay MacLeod, gives a history of Holmes County and how African Americans fought white domination from its founding in 1833. It is a magnificent piece of writing that reveals how people of Holmes County struggled with a "vision of the future" and shows the movement as an unfinished revolution that needs to continue.

What is important about Holmes County as a locale is that it was one of the fiercest battlegrounds in the U.S. for civil rights. And although this individual locale is portrayed, what becomes clear is how universal are the struggles that relate to the past and future. What the book itself shows is the process, the momentum of the civil rights struggle—how it was born and how it continued throughout the years. The movement lives through each individual who experienced it.

The students asked questions about the freedom schools, the freedom riders' struggles, about integration of schools and hospitals. They wanted to know about violence from the whites in power, and constant abuse and struggle to overcome in terms of voter registration.

I'll never forget Mr. Jodie "Preacher" Saffold's interview called "I Caught Hell":

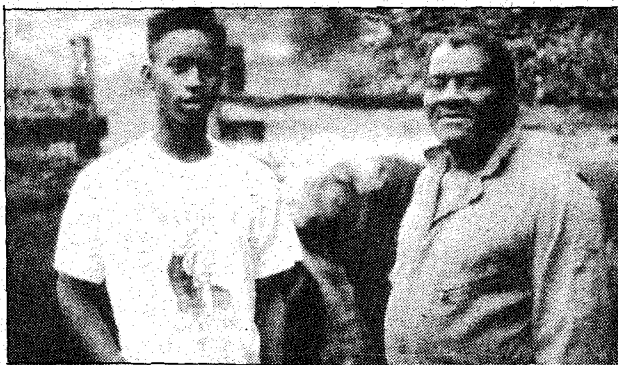
Q: Mr. Saffold, who was the first people involved in the Civil Rights Movement?

A: I would say...the so-called dumb people. Up from the grassroots, they call it. But now, the school teachers, the educated people, they ain't did a damn thang! The preachers ain't neither. The so-called dumb people open the way for everybody. See, the table was set. Yeah, and when the table got set with cake and pie, school teachers and everybody come in helping eat it up."

In a very direct way, Jodie Saffold has spelled out the elitism that so plagued the movement at that time. He also presents a kind of self-direction that was very needed in the movement, especially when he describes how he housed many freedom riders and was so determined to take his daughters to integrate the schools.

He also discussed the importance of land ownership as a question of power. The introduction also talks about why this is so important: "With mechanized agriculture and other trends undermining the small family farm, the Mileston farmers never had incomes much above subsistence; but what they did have was more threatening to the caste system: independence, pride and control of their destiny." This is what one feels when they "hear" Jodie Saffold's voice.

Mr. Shadrach Davis's interview is called, "It Don't Pay to be Too Afraid." He spoke of the enormous, spontaneous growth of the meetings in Mileston (the first meetings held in the county): "The meetings got to be so big and so important that they built what they call Holmes County Community Center. An' every third Sunday they would hold a county-wide meeting."



A young interviewer with Jodie "Preacher" Saffold

What is emphasized throughout this book is that while everyone kept an eye on Birmingham, Alabama with its mass mobilizations what is not so well-known is Holmes County's tradition of community organizing which built an indigenous movement there.

Mrs. Bee Jenkins's interview is called "Ready to Shoot Lead." She spoke about the horrors of segregation and her deep involvement in the fight against it including being a part of registering to vote, integrating hospitals and participating in marches. The last question posed to Mrs. Jenkins was this:

Q: Do you think what you talked about today with these two students can help them, and why?

A: I hope so...I would like to know that we'll be leaving something behind that will carry on the way we started...I have always wanted young people to get involved so they could know the struggles we came through to get them where they are today. Some lost their lives, too. ...I'm glad someone is eventually gonna write a book about Holmes County, because it's been a need so long."

This book is for everyone: for those who think they may not know enough about struggles in the Civil Rights Movement and for those who think they know all about it. This work gives the reader a glimpse of the history and struggles today in one part of the Mississippi Delta.

On to Stonewall 25!

Chicago—On June 26, one and a half million people are expected to converge on New York City for Stonewall 25 and the International March on the UN to Affirm the Human Rights of Lesbian and Gay People. The march commemorates the Stonewall rebellion of June 1969—three days and nights of rioting in the streets of Greenwich Village in protest of police raids and harassment of gays and lesbians.

Stonewall 25 will be led off by some of the very same mostly working-class drag queens whose brick-wielding began the riots 25 years ago. I find this to be a very historical image, especially at a time when the marginalized elements of gay culture are being shunned by their own people, i.e., the assimilationists who want to present a Richie Cunningham face to capitalist America. *Make me puke, no thank you. I'm too pissed to assimilate.*

Stonewall 25 comes on the heels of last year's March on Washington for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Civil Rights. I felt last year's march wasn't angry enough. I fear that Stonewall 25 could be viewed by many as another great party with the Gay Games and Cultural Festival scheduled at the same time in New York City, which are already getting more attention in the gay press than remembering the struggles.

I hope we won't forget what hell we've gone through and that we are there for more change, more respect, and more of our lives to be saved. It was the Stonewall rebellion that thrust the movement forward.

—Tom Williamson

10 p.m.? Forget that!

Oakland, Cal.—On May 17, youth from all over the East Bay gathered to protest the proposed curfew for Oakland. The 10 p.m. curfew would restrict youth from being on the streets or hanging out in restaurants, movie theaters, and in parks and cars.

Billed as a deterrent to "violence and crime by youth," the curfew would only serve as an excuse to repress young people even more. Even the police have admitted that the curfew will be selectively enforced: "If they're good kids, just hanging out, we won't bother them. This (proposed curfew) will be so that we can take in potentially violent criminals and youth gang members."

One 13-year-old said, "It's true that this is just another attempt at repressing the Black race, the Latino race, and other minorities. You and I both know that me and my friends are gonna be the ones taken in, not the white kids from the suburbs who got sh-- going down at the BART Station. It's my friends who get arrested for hanging out in my neighborhood."

—Lynn Halley

State-capitalism strip-mines the sea

Suddenly, time is running out for the once seemingly limitless stocks of ocean fish, the primary source of protein for one billion people in Asia and many more in island nations and coastal Africa, and an industry which employs over 200 million people.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reported recently that all 17 of the world's major fisheries have reached or exceeded their natural limits, with nine in serious decline and four more "commercially depleted"; 67 species are being overfished.

Pacific salmon and steelhead have virtually disappeared from Puget Sound, as have red snapper and grouper from the Gulf of Mexico. Canada shut down the Grand Banks cod fishery in the Atlantic, putting 33,000 people out of work. Much of New England's Georges Bank—now largely barren of the haddock, cod and flounder that once swam there in the billions—has been closed to fishing, but other regulatory efforts have been undermined by fishing interests dead set on short-term profits at the cost of the fishery's destruction.

Overfishing is the nail in the coffin of fish populations already weakened by pollution and habitat destruction, caused by coastal development, filling in of wetlands, runoff from farming and logging, and so on.

What accounts for this insatiable drive to pull the last fish from the sea? In the 1970s and 1980s, many countries cultivated domestic fishing fleets, state-capitalist hothouse style, resulting in, as the FAO reports, \$124 billion spent each year to catch \$70 billion worth of fish.

Competing on the world market, some of these state-subsidized fleets use sonar, aircraft and satellites to track schools of fish. Giant nets pull up tens of thousands of fish at a time, and huge, mechanized "factory trawlers" process them on the spot and dump unwanted fish, mammals, seabirds—80% or more of the haul, now dead—back into the sea.

To the extent that it reduces the labor time socially necessary to catch fish, high-tech fishing reduces its value. A decrease in the product's value and an increase in the capital invested in the ship and equipment make it necessary to catch more fish to maintain profits, even with state subsidies. The time it takes for nature to produce the fish, however, increases since depleted stocks need more time to recover.

What is at work here economically is the contradiction between labor time and time of production. Just think of fish where Marx says "forest" in Capital:

"The long time of production (which comprises a relatively small amount of working time)...makes forestry little adapted for private, and therefore, capitalist enterprise, which is essentially private even if associated capitalists take the place of the individual capitalist. The development of civilization and of industry in general has ever shown itself so active in the destruction of forests, that everything done by it for their preservation and production, compared to its destructive effect, appears infinitesimal." (Vol. 2, p. 279, Kerr edition)

World capitalism has reacted to shrinking fish stocks in two ways. One is treaties, which, according to the Worldwatch Institute's *State of the World 1994*, do not significantly address land-based pollution, habitat destruction or overfishing. The other is fish farming, which only partially makes up for what is no longer available in the oceans—for those who can afford the market price, not for the Third World poor.

The scarcity of fish forces small-scale fishing crews to spend more time fishing—even risking their lives in stormy weather that few would have braved 20 years ago. In Sierra Leone, for example, modern fleets fish for export, undermining traditional fishers who supply 75% of the animal protein people consume there.

In fighting back, small-scale fishers in Indonesia have attacked and burned trawling vessels that enter their fishing grounds. Canadians such as Bernard Martin, one of the 33,000 put out of work, formed Fishers Organized for the Revitalization of Communities and Ecosystems. Martin said, "Dragging [huge nets across the sea floor] is a technology that is the equivalent of clear-cutting or strip-mining."

The impetus for such technologies is capitalism's need to constantly reduce labor time and its disregard for the actual time of production. This type of environmental destruction is inherent in the capitalist manifestation of time. To overcome it requires struggling for a society where the relation of time to the human being is what Marx spelled out as: Time is the space for human development.

—Franklin Dmitryev

Homeless teen speaks out

San Francisco—When I was a kid, my mama taught me that as women, we had to be strong and stand up for what we believe in. My mama didn't have much. She was single before that was fashionable. But she did teach me that in a white man's world, all we can do is fight, fight, fight.

By the time I started school I was already the fighter, no, the warrior my mama wanted me to be. Being taught in a white man's school, by a woman who was only Black in the color of her skin, I learned that the white men were scared of a woman who could hold her own. Everything in their system is done to keep us, the Blacks, the women, the minorities, down. The Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) is never enough to get beyond: beyond survival, beyond living day to day, beyond the Tenderloin. It is like they are scared of us. The white men are scared of what would happen if my people learned to read, learned to stand up, learned to vote, to think, and became part of the society they criticize us for not participating in.

—Shidana

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Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

In May, five months late and over eight months since the September 1993 Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement, Israeli troops finally redeployed in the Gaza Strip and around the West Bank town of Jericho, turning over power to a Palestinian police force composed of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) militants. While there were some small-scale celebrations in Gaza and Jericho, most Palestinian Arabs were dubious about the prospects for genuine self-rule under the new arrangements.

First, there was the problem of the Israeli government's intransigence and obstruction, the main reason for the unconscionable delay from the originally agreed upon December 1993 date to May 1994 for the implementation of self-rule in Gaza and Jericho. Israel's policy of obstruction continued even after the whole world, including many Israelis, was outraged by the Feb. 25 Hebron massacre of over 40 Arabs by a right-wing follower of Meir Kahane. The government of Yitzhak Rabin was extremely slow in cracking down on Kahane's followers, who are a small fringe element even among the militant Jewish settler movement.

In a stronger position to undermine the peace accords are the 25,000 armed members of the Gush Emunim movement, who live in fortress-like enclaves in the occupied territories and who vow to resist Palestinian self-rule violently. Their leader Rabbi Moshe Levinger openly sanctifies massacres of Arabs, and was himself convicted

Greece in Balkan crisis

Greece has tightened a trade embargo against Macedonia after it was formally recognized as "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" by the U.S. in February. The Greek government of Andreas Papandreu has become increasingly shrill over its own claims on Macedonia and parts of Albania.

The Greek government has claimed that Macedonia usurped the name and flag of the adjacent region of northern Greece when it declared independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, with aims of ultimately claiming Greek territory. Given the relative size and military might of the two countries, this is absurd and merely a cover for Greece's growing strident nationalism which is entering the Balkan crisis.

A group of right-wing nationalists, supported primarily by the Greek Orthodox church, had laid claim to nearly all of southern Albania, which they call "northern Epirus." The church has financed a radio station which broadcasts to ethnic Greeks who live in Albania, and set up loudspeakers on the border which blast provocative messages and martial music. It is also taking in young Greeks from Albania for "training" and sending them back "to fight for Hellenism and prevent Islam from taking over this country."

In April, a commando group from Greece attacked a military barracks inside Albania. The Greek government has fanned the flames. Only days before the attack, the foreign minister stated that the Greek minority in Albania was attached to Greece by an "umbilical cord." And last summer, after Albania expelled a Greek Orthodox bishop accused of calling for the merging of "northern Epirus" with Greece, the Greek government expelled thousands of Albanians who had been living legally in Greece.

Divided PLO assumes 'power'

some years ago of murdering an Arab in Hebron, for which he received a slap on the wrist ten-week jail sentence. In addition, three prominent rightist rabbis plus former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir have stated that any Israeli soldier who removes Jewish settlers anywhere has committed a grave sin. Far from standing up to such pressures, the Rabin government has caved in to them again and again.

The second grave contradiction undermining the peace accords is one internal to the Palestinian movement itself. The fractured PLO is in such disarray that even after Israel finally agreed to turn over Gaza and Jericho, the date had to be postponed for several more weeks because the PLO was not ready to take over. PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat's authority has always been based as much on the gun and on money from authoritarian Arab governments as on support from the grassroots. Since losing his financial support from the Arab monarchies after backing Iraq in the Gulf War, Arafat's leverage over the PLO has also weakened, since he is a paymaster without any funds. This may change a bit if new donations promised from leading capitalist nations and Arab governments arrive as promised.

More importantly, in addition to the expected chal-

lenges to the peace agreement from rejectionist groups such as Hamas and various Stalinist PLO factions, Arafat is facing opposition even from his trusted lieutenants, people such as Farouk Kaddoumi and Hanan Ashrawi, who agree with the main lines of his policies. Even these former Arafat supporters are refusing to serve under him on the 24-person political authority for Gaza and Jericho, because as one put it: "It does not matter if we are 5, 20, or 24. Arafat will, as usual, make every decision himself."

These conflicts are not limited to the upper levels of the PLO. Over the past several months, key Arafat supporters at the grassroots levels in the territories have been resigning in droves. One key resignation was that of the head of Fatah, Arafat's own PLO faction, in the whole of Gaza. In addition, a group of 120 Palestinian intellectuals including such prominent figures as professor Edward Said, Palestinian national poet Mahmoud Darwish, and former chief Palestinian negotiator Haidar Abdel Shafi, have been demanding democratization of the PLO, so far to no avail. Without this, they predict, Palestinian self-rule will be a disaster.

Further down the road, there are several other problems. When will the elections for Palestinians in the whole of the territories, including Jerusalem, originally promised for July 1994 take place, and under what conditions? Now that Gaza has been largely relinquished to the PLO, something even rightist Israelis accede to, will there be any real movement toward Palestinian self-rule on the West Bank, or in Jerusalem, where the Israeli Right has vowed never to give in and where, in the case of Jerusalem, even Rabin claims he will never give up exclusively Jewish control of this Jewish-Muslim-Christian city? Finally, what will happen to the 2.8 million Palestinians and their descendants who fled in 1948 and the 800,000 who fled in 1967, many of whom today languish in refugee camps in Arab countries?

Yemen's tragic civil war

In May, forces from northern Yemen launched full-scale attacks on those from the South, touching off civil war. Within two weeks, the northern forces were at the gates of Aden, the largest city in the South, and had also moved toward taking control of the South's oil fields.

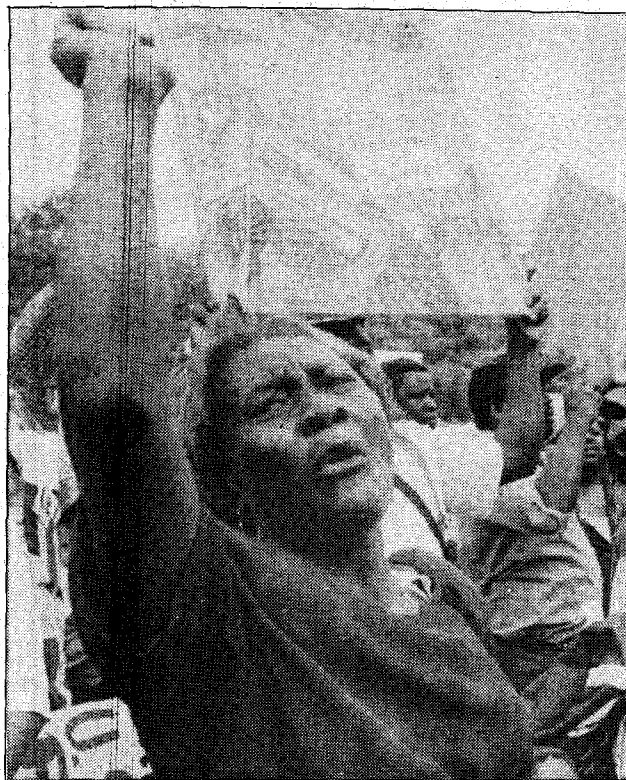
Ever since 1990, when the military-tribal leaders of North Yemen (population 12 million) agreed with the formerly Marxist-Leninist leadership of South Yemen (population 3 million) to form a single unified state, there have been tensions. The economy went almost immediately into severe crisis when Saudi Arabia expelled thousands of Yemenis who had worked there, some for decades, in reprisal for Yemen's neutral stance during the Gulf War.

In multiparty elections held in 1993, the southern-based Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) placed third, with the dominant northern faction led by President Ali Abdullah Saleh coming in first, and an Islamic religious party taking second place. A string of unsolved murders of key YSP leaders in the years since 1990 has also been a major source of tension, leading YSP politicians from the South to assume residence in Aden last year, creating the implicit threat of a repartition of the country.

This civil war is a particularly tragic one for the Arab-Muslim world. Until 1986, when it self-destructed in a civil war between Stalinist factions, South Yemen had represented a leftist, secularist pole on the Arabian peninsula, where the predominant form of government has been the reactionary, patriarchal sheikdom or kingdom as seen in Saudi Arabia. Even though much secular ground was given up after Yemen's unification, including passage of a new "Islamic" family law in 1992, a few elements of political democracy and of leftist and secular politics remained within unified Yemen. Unless the South succeeds in its new effort at secession, which is unlikely given the balance of military forces and the cynicism of the southern masses toward their leaders ever since 1986, all remnants of leftist politics will face severe repression in a northern-ruled Yemeni state.

Haiti refugees betrayed

A U.S.-brokered, UN-sanctioned near total trade embargo on Haiti went into effect May 22, after Haiti's military rulers refused to relinquish power. Instead, on May 11, Gen. Raoul Cedras installed a puppet president, Emil



Jonassaint, showing the military's scorn for both U.S. government policy and ousted president Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Cedras has hinted he may resign from the military and run for president, in a Pinochet-style move, when new elections are scheduled.

The crisis in Haiti took a deep curve when the Clinton administration announced May 9 that it would not automatically return Haitian refugees which the U.S. military abducts on the high seas, but instead provide "due process" before returning them to Haiti, and often death. This so-called change of face was meant to pacify growing criticism of Clinton's policy, especially from Black America.

Nearly two weeks later, not a single Haitian has been "processed"; instead, over 1,000 have been summarily returned. The criteria for a Haitian to qualify for political asylum are so narrow that they rule out virtually the entire country. The hollowness of U.S. concern for the Haitians is obvious in one fact alone: the processing centers are to be set up anywhere but on U.S. soil.

The May embargo is turning Haiti into a nation of near total unemployment; since the latest sanctions were first announced, nearly all foreign capitalists have shut down their factories, throwing thousands more out of work. At the same time, the Haitian military has stepped up its repression against the Haitian people together with a campaign of narrow nationalism against U.S. imperialism.

Despite this, the U.S. government wants above all to reach a reconciliation with the Haitian military, or its successors, in order to avert anything like the 1986 uprising which overthrew the decades of Duvalier rule. It is crucial now to oppose U.S. imperialist intervention while supporting the Haitian people's opposition to their own class rulers.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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JULY 1994

25¢

The American way: poverty wages



by B. Ann Lastelle

Here we go again. One Wednesday line #2 made 92 pallets of product; the rate is 72 pallets. The line leader proudly announced the feat the next morning at our kickoff meeting, and our supervisor praised the people who had worked on that line. One co-worker asked: "If the rate is 72, what sense does it make to do 92? They'll just raise the rate for that job." Our supervisor said that if she really didn't understand, he would explain it to her after the meeting.

What he said was that if we make the product faster, using fewer "man hours," we make it cheaper; the company will make more money; and we thereby secure our jobs. One problem with his line of reasoning is that, of the 14 people on line #2 that day, only two—the line leader and me—were Helene Curtis employees.

The 12 others were day laborers, whose jobs are never secure. Just the opposite: the faster we all work, the fewer hours they work. Sure enough, by Friday only two lines (instead of five) were running—and only 33 people (instead of over 60) were working—because we had done "so well" earlier in the week. Fewer than 40 hours at \$4.50 an hour is hardly a living wage.

Karl Marx, in his analysis of capitalist production in *Capital*, established the value of labor power—what workers sell to the capitalist, their ability to labor—as equal to the value of the necessities of life. The capitalist makes a profit by forcing workers to labor longer and harder than they would have to to merely produce the equivalent value of their own needs. In the search for ever greater profit, the capitalist may also resort to lowering wages below the value of labor power, below the level at which workers can maintain themselves and their children.

Marx noted: "What experience shows to the capitalist generally is a constant excess of population... Hence capital is reckless of the health or length of life of the laborer, unless under compulsion from society." He gave an

(Continued on page 3)

Black World

1964 — the Summer that never ended



by Lou Turner

The Civil Rights Movement (CRM) brought many things to pass. The interminable memorialization of the Movement's milestones with conferences, commemorations, museum exhibits and "homecomings" continues to evoke "remembrance of things past." More often than not, however, these nostalgic pilgrimages evince the raw reality of a present where the spirit of "freedom now!" has long since succumbed to a spirit of piling despair.

Memorials to the CRM often confront us with just how profoundly unfinished the revolution is. This is unavoidable, despite all efforts to limit such gatherings to the spirit of reunion and remembrance, which was the intention of the organizers of the 30th anniversary commemoration of the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer Project, held in Jackson, Mississippi, June 23-26.

As remote as so abstruse a philosopher as Hegel might appear to be from the Mississippi Blackbelt, his philosophic description of the outcome of all practical movements aimed at realizing the Good is strangely apropos when considering today's post-Civil Rights reality. In the aftermath of such movements, "There are still two worlds in opposition," writes Hegel, "one a realm of subjectivity in the pure regions of transparent thought, the other a realm of objectivity in the element of an externally manifold actuality that is an undisclosed realm of darkness" (*Science of Logic*, trans. A.V. Miller, p. 820).

Whatever may be said of the subjectivity that inhabits the "pure regions of transparent thought," for instance, its evoking of historical memory with freedom songs and testimonials, or the assertion of fresh commitments of our personal and collective will to new struggles, there is no avoiding the fact that the key to the "unresolved contradiction" between thought and reality is the troubling question of how to face that "externally manifold actuality that is an undisclosed realm of darkness."

(Continued on page 10)

Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1994-95

The objectivity of philosophy in today's world crises



'Militant Black women lead southern labor battles.'



'Unemployed—casualties of China's economic 'boom.'

I. Dialectics of organization and economic reality

News and Letters Committees publishes the Draft of its Perspectives Thesis each year directly in the pages of *N&L*. We urge your participation in our discussion around this thesis because our age is in such total crisis that no revolutionary organization can allow any separation between theory and practice, workers and intellectuals, "inside" and "outside," philosophy and organization. We are raising questions and ask you to help in working out the answers.

Nowhere is the hypocrisy of U.S. foreign policy more evident than in regard to Haiti. After reneging on his campaign promise not to turn away the Haitian boat people fleeing the murderous regime of General Cedras, and after allowing Cedras' army to perpetrate thousands more political murders, President Clinton has suddenly feigned compassion for the tortured Haitian masses by sending signals for a possible invasion of Haiti. It has included such markers as rounding up political consensus from world leaders, especially in the Caribbean and Latin America; tightening the economic sanctions; presenting a Black point-man in former Congressman William Gray to front U.S. imperialist policy; and the ever-ready rationale of "protecting American lives" for public consumption at home.

What drives Clinton's actions is neither the sharp denunciation of his duplicitous policies by ousted Haitian President Aristide nor any concern with the needs of the Haitian people. It is rather his effort to "vindicate U.S. leadership" and the "credibility" of U.S. military forces, as Secretary of State Warren Christopher put it at a recent Senate subcommittee hearing.

This need to "vindicate U.S. leadership" flows from the mishaps which have afflicted recent U.S. foreign policy, especially in Somalia and Bosnia. Despite the illusion that the collapse of Communism and the U.S. "victory" in the Gulf War would usher in a "new era" of American dominance, recent events have instead demonstrated the limits of U.S. prowess. As a result, Clinton has become selective about entangling himself in new forms of intervention overseas.

For that reason, and for the moment, the simmering crisis on the Korean peninsula is being left to simmer. Clinton's diffidence about the ability of the U.S. to impose "order" overseas may even lead him into an arrangement that would stop short of the outright invasion of Haiti. However, since Haiti is seen as far less entrapping an area than other global hotspots, it has been chosen as the location for "demonstrating U.S. resolve."

These realities have their origin in the economic crisis at home. The inseparability of economic-political crises from ideology has always been the hallmark of our state-capitalist age. What has intensified today with Clintonomics is the inseparability of domestic crises from the conduct of foreign policy. So deep is the economic and political morass of this most affluent nation that U.S. capitalism no longer possesses the material resources to supply the basic needs of the mass of its populace—let alone provide for the rest of

the world. That is starkly shown by the social agenda of that "New Democrat," Bill Clinton.

A. 'Ending welfare as we have known it' or restructuring poverty?

The growth of homelessness and poverty in the U.S. received a new bureaucratic impetus with Clinton's June 11 unveiling of his \$9.3 billion welfare reform program. The most draconian welfare plan ever proposed by an American president, it includes punitive measures against young women having children and a two year limit to benefits. The architect of the infamous "benign neglect" of the Nixon administration, sociologist-cum-Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, beamed with glee that Clinton was "the first President in our history to have the courage and nobility to address the problem of out-of-wedlock births." Social relations were so turned upside down that the noble, the humanism of the poor, is made to appear "base," while the base, the demonization of the poor, is made to appear "noble."

The announcement of Clinton's plan coincided with the NAACP-sponsored African-American leadership summit, called to face the social crisis in Black reality. That not a word about Clinton's attack on the poor was uttered at the concluding press conference of the Baltimore summit where "leadership, leadership, leadership" was the order of the day, is a measure of the failure not only of this summit but of post-Civil Rights Black leadership historically. The only thing that unified the disparate agendas at the summit was their defense against the media-generated clamor for them to disavow the anti-semitism of Louis Farrakhan—a self-righteous defense of their own noble yearning to "never again allow an external force to attempt to dictate with whom we can meet."

The Republican Right wasted no time in brandishing its criticism of Clinton's welfare reform, motivated no doubt by their chagrin at him stealing their agenda. Where Clinton usurped the conservative crime issue earlier this year with his "three strikes and you're out" Crime Bill, his Welfare Plan stipulates "two years and you're kicked off," whether you have a job or not. Moreover, he intends to pay for his program by reducing spending for other social programs, especially for immigrants. "Ending welfare as we have known it" Clinton-style will therefore not end poverty, but only restructure it.

This restructuring of poverty flows from the restructuring of the U.S. economy over the last two decades—a restructuring which has disclosed the most uneven differentiation of American capital accumulation in this century. **De-industrialization** of the Northeast, Midwest and parts of the far West, along with **re-industrialization** of the South, is the

(continued on page 5)

Women's history in civil rights debated

by Laurie Green

So many discussions at the Third Southern Conference on Women's History at Rice University in Houston June 2-5, represented serious efforts to grapple with the South's legacy of freedom struggles, that the conference often transcended the bounds of academia. Particularly significant was that many focused on women civil rights activists—their historical significance, their invisibility in historical accounts and their legacy.

The choice of Houston as a site for the conference drew attention to the neglect of the Latino dimensions of Texas and Florida. Traditionally, Chicanos and Latinos

Woman as Reason

have been viewed as "not really part of the South" because they don't fit the Old South model of development. However, the absence of Chicanos at the conference was as striking as the small number of women from historically Black colleges.

Significantly the first speaker was Evelyn Nakano Glenn, a Japanese American historian. Her talk, "Beyond Biracialism: Multi-Racial Relations and Regional History," addressed the invisibility of women in the South who don't fit into "bi-racial" (Black-white) categories. Glenn warned against erasing the rich diversity of women's positions at the intersection of race, class, ethnicity and gender. She also argued that different groups of women have power over other women.

Thinking back on some comments that followed, however, I worried that this discussion sidestepped Black-white relations as hegemonic in the U.S. specifically because of the history of slavery and Black liberation struggles. Other forms of racism cannot be ripped out of the context of that dual legacy.

The speech that impressed me most was Tera Hunter's at a panel on "How New is the New South? Voices from the Borders." Hunter's forthcoming book on household workers in Atlanta is called *Washing Amazons Strike Back*. She discussed the general strike of laundry workers during the 1881 Atlanta Exposition and threatened strike during the 1895 Cotton Exposition at which Booker T. Washington gave his infamous speech supporting Black accommodation to segregation.

Hunter challenged interpretations of the conservative turn-of-the-century New South economic, political and social relations based on the alternative vision found in these laundry workers. Her talk discussed the importance of dialectics in relation to race, class and gender—what she called the "contradictory dialectic of domination and dissent."

Hunter's comments illuminate how oral history became a thread running through the conference. Two white graduate students from Arkansas have begun an oral history project on women in the Civil Rights Movement: "Rearing a Revolutionary: Mothers and Daughters of the Arkansas Delta." A woman from North Carolina, writing on the impact of historical memory of past struggles on today, focused on Tillery, a town important in the Civil Rights Movement. The Concerned Citizens of Tillery now work on issues like water pollution by corporate hog farmers who are forcing Black farmers off their land.

Constance Curry, a white woman who was a civil rights leader in Mississippi, chaired one important workshop. She is now doing an oral history on Mae Bertha Carter, the Black woman in Sunflower County who led the fight to integrate the schools there (See N&L, May 1993). Curry, in turn, was discussed by Bernice McNair Barnett, who is writing a book on women-leaders in the Civil Rights Movement.

Barnett's comment that the very decades white feminists consider the "doldrums" for feminism—the 1940s and '50s—were decades of activism for Black women, prompted much discussion. This point, to me, signifies even more than the ongoing nature of Black women's activism. A new world of struggle was emerging with the activity of Black and working women during and after World War I—a point made powerfully by Raya Dunayevskaya in her *Women's Liberation and the Dia-*

lectics of Revolution (1985). Barnett related her dismay with feminists who argue that Black women's work wasn't feminist because they didn't call it that.

However, another participant, a white historian, asked Barnett why, if she considered these women's activism as feminist, whether she would also consider as feminist such women's organizations as the one formed by white women in Little Rock to keep Black children out of the segregated white schools in 1959—since they too were organized as women. Barnett and others gave her an impassioned response that feminism had to mean everyone's freedom or it wasn't feminism.

The discussion in this workshop underlined to me that while oral histories are indispensable because of how they link scholars to their "sources," this relationship is not alone the total answer for making history serve the purpose of working out the "contradictory dialectic of domination and dissent." Thus this conference, while inspirational because of the attention historians gave to these untold stories, must also be taken as a challenge to the battle of ideas over what direction feminist theory will take in relation to grasping the meaning of historical experience for today.

♀ Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey



More than two and a half years after they went on strike against Diamond Walnut in Stockton, Cal. for decent wages and benefits (see March 1992 N&L), women workers are still on the picket line battling for their jobs. The company replaced the more than 200 women—many with over 20 years seniority—with mainly younger men.

Several hundred South African women who live in a squatters settlement on the pavement of Umgeni Road outside of the Durban train station are facing not only homelessness, but the daily fear of attack, rape and robbery by local thugs. Although the police station is only a few blocks away, cops have left the women and children to fend for themselves. Women's groups are petitioning newly elected President Nelson Mandela to ensure that police regularly patrol this area, investigate the attacks and arrest those responsible.

—Information from Equality Now

A group of women in Ukraine are organizing the Ukrainian Center on Women's Studies focusing on: ending discrimination against women; supporting women who are victims of violence; medical research to combat the ecological impact of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster; reviving the cultural achievements of Ukrainian women; translating feminist works into Ukrainian; creating the first feminist library in Kiev, and preparing women's studies programs for the universities.

Media sells O.J. hype

Chicago—I am writing this in response to the article in the June issue on the mind of the oppressed. (See "Spirit of revolt," N&L, p. 1.) The ruling class fears the mind of the oppressed because they realize its potential. They try to manipulate it in many ways. Recently, the covers of Time and Newsweek depicted an almost identical picture of O.J. Simpson, except that Time's was a darker-enhanced picture. Why did they do it? To portray a more sinister-looking O.J. Simpson to sell more magazines?

This is not a new thing for people who are familiar with the concept of the "culture industry" and how it makes the masses its object. The media wants to decide Simpson's guilt for the masses because it's a spectacular story which sells. Culture industries have a way of twisting the truth for their own benefit.

Why has there been so much media attention devoted to O.J. Simpson's actions of wife beating? It has brought spouse abuse to the public's eyes more than ever before, which is good. But when we buy into the "O.J. Simpson is guilty" story without a trial, or co-opt the press's view as our own, we buy into, not the tragedy of his ex-wife's death, but the spectacular idea of a superstar, an American Hero, beating his ex-wife to death.

It is clear the media wants us to think Simpson is guilty. Why? What is the issue here? It has enabled the media to take our minds off the issues of national health care and other questions which require a lot of thought. We need to not only watch the story itself, but how it affects society as this piece of news unfolds inside the press. Does the press merely want to report the news, or is there something more to it?

—Christine

Workers take on Sipes

Editor's note: Workers at Howe Sipes baseball apparel and jacket company in Memphis, Tenn., most of them Black women, voted in Local 282 of the United Furniture Workers of America in 1993. Because Sipes refuses to bargain in good faith, the AFL-CIO has sanctioned a boycott. Below is a N&L interview with workers.

Memphis, Tenn.—The boss is very prejudiced, especially toward us Black women. One supervisor likes to look down ladies' blouses. But more it's how the boss figures we don't deserve our rights to anything—the work, the say-so, the money, the respect. He doesn't want to give us a contract and he treats us like dirt, like we don't even exist. He called us b-----s and trash.

If my day care calls, the manager gets mad. He throws the phone down and says: somebody's calling about your child. All of us are heads of household. The majority in the plant receive food stamps and work 40 hours a week, and we can't even provide ourselves with lunch.

We don't get any insurance—it's too high. For a single person, all they pay is \$71 a year. We have to pay \$30 some dollars per week. It's \$500 a month for a family. I take home \$168 a week. You think I can afford that? Out of that whole plant, only seven people have insurance.

Our biggest problem is favoritism. The boss has certain picks. If you're for the company you have all the privileges, like access to the phone, the bathroom, chit chat with your friends. But as long as you're for the union you have to sit there and be quiet. If the boss is mad at you, he'll take you off your work and put you on somebody else's. They use rules to lay you off. Last week we got a whole board full of rules. It's so many it'll take your whole break to read them.

Now the boss is slacking off work. He's sending workers home, telling them to call back Monday. What he's doing is taking our work and shipping it to another plant. He had a man come in with a video camera. He's going to say this is a time study. He took that video to another plant and is showing these people our work. Now baseball season is over and it's wool time. They got the tape, so they could learn how to sew wool jackets.

Since we voted the union in, he ships work out so all we can get is \$5 an hour [because there's not enough production to make above the base rate]. You've got ladies that have been here 27 years making \$5 an hour. People in the cutting department are cutting the work, but they're boxing it and they don't put labels on it. The boss has a truck come to drive it to Mississippi.

He came to the workers one by one, telling them he was losing money. He said he couldn't bring the work out because union people wouldn't sew the work. And he had to go borrow money—and this man is filthy rich. He didn't let the union people get the work, that's why he couldn't bring us the work out.

But we stand our ground. We speak our minds. The plant manager gives you these stupid questions like: Why were you in the bathroom? He knows what you do in there! They want to run it like it's the nineteenth century. You're a slave, do what I say.

Global issues test NWSA

Ames, Iowa—The 1994 National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) conference in Ames, Iowa, saw 900 women gathered to discuss "Teaching theory and action: Women working in a global context." This global theme was certainly manifest in the number of panels on China, Russia, East Europe, Africa and Latin America.

In a panel on "Feminist responses to Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina," Katarina Vidovic, from the Croatian feminist organization Kareta, critiqued feminists who fail to understand that rapes committed against women in Bosnia and Croatia were not a weapon of war as in "all wars," but a genocidal policy by the Serbian government. She challenged any abstract appeal for peace which does not distinguish between perpetrators of genocide and those who are its victims.

Frieda Afary, a Bosnia solidarity activist, asked, "Why are the Bosnians being forced to accept a plan masterminded by world powers which solidifies ethnic cleansing? And why are solidarity activists in the U.S. either tail-ending Clinton or making alliances with right-wing critics of Clinton?" To her this betrayal showed what happens when a solidarity movement accepts the limits of the given instead of working out a humanist philosophy of liberation independent of all state powers.

At the plenary on "Feminist Theories in a Global Perspective," Chandra Mohanty, editor of *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, argued feminists cannot address global issues without taking a stand against racism and capitalism: "At the same time that we hear about democracy in East Europe, democracy is being undermined in the U.S. Democracy is a code word for capitalism, free-market capitalism." She challenged women to work out a new feminist praxis.

It was sad that Barbara Smith's powerful talk was scheduled for the very end of the last plenary, after most had left. Smith, who is currently writing a history of African-American lesbians and gays, challenged postmodernism for reducing her subjectivity as a Black lesbian to a literary and political construct.

You could hear the anger in Smith's voice when she attributed anti-historical and anti-revolutionary trends in theory to reactionary regimes and the move toward fascism on a global scale. The key question in taking the measure of any theory remains, in Sonia Sanchez's words, "how do it free us?" Smith emphasized that she still considers Marxism the best theory because of its analysis of power and its vision of a new world of revolution. The questions raised at this conference demand serious discussion and action.

—Sheila Fuller

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Southern Black labor fights back

At Somerville Mills...

Editor's note: More than 200 workers at Somerville Mills, all Black and nearly all women, voted in 1988 for representation by Furniture Workers Local 282, but have yet to win a first contract with the company. They sew upscale ladies' garments for labels like Victoria's Secret, Laura Ashley and Frederick's of Hollywood for an average wage of \$5 an hour.

Somerville, Tenn.—Thursday, June the 23rd was our 53rd negotiation session. The company has quit even sending company representatives to the table. No one ever shows up now but the attorney, and he never settles anything or comes to an agreement on anything. As long as the union holds, we are going to hold our position. We are not going to move.

Before we won the campaign we were working 9½ hours a day and 5 hours on Saturday. After we won the campaign, there was no work in that plant. That created layoff after layoff until it discouraged a lot of the girls. A lot of them quit and went elsewhere for jobs.

The ladies that are on welfare, food stamps, drawing child support and living in low income houses can make it like that. What divided the workers so was those on welfare didn't care that the ones that had no other income but wages from Somerville Mills couldn't pay their bills. Those workers who were getting extra benefits said they didn't need a union, because coming in there working a 40-hour week and making a decent wage would eliminate some of those other assets.

About three years ago this company brought in about 20 Cambodian workers. They were bearing the expense of renting a bus to transport these workers out of Memphis, which is 100 miles a day, and providing a job for the bus driver. The company told them, "Don't speak English," and told them, "Don't talk to those union people." All of them quit eventually.

The company went back this year and brought in five Asians and about six Africans. We feel that the company only brought them in to be names on a decert (union decertification petition) going in. They have shown no interest in joining the union, but the Africans are accepting our literature and ask questions.

When we see that the company's doing wrong, we're going to take a stand. That's all we have to show right now. That company is able to give people jobs; they're able to allow people to do what they want to do, work the way they want to work; they are able to pay people to where they feel that they're being satisfied. What the company does, it shows. What the union does is through the Labor Board and what we just do in the plant.

Even though we have a lot of workers in there that don't support the union, a lot of times they'll tell us, "We need this" and "Can you tell me how to do this because my supervisor gave this to me." That's why we feel that, if we continue to fight and press on this company and we're fortunate enough to get this contract signed and in motion, we're going to have a lot of support.

—Somerville Mills workers

...and Hood Furniture

Editor's note: Workers at Hood Furniture Manufacturing, 95% of whom are Black, voted in January 1989 to be represented by the Furniture Workers Division of the IUE (International Union of Electrical Workers), Local 282, whose leaders are Black. In May 1993 Hood executives suddenly agreed to negotiate a contract with white IUE representatives in Washington, D.C. if the workers were moved to white-led IUE Local 797.

Perils of work in China

Authorities in mainland China have acknowledged 52 workers have died in the collapse of a factory building in Zhuhai's Quinshan Industrial Zone. Employees of Yue San Textile were ordered by management to salvage valuable cotton from inside the building on June 17, the day following a fire which had caused extensive damage. A four-hour rainstorm had further weakened the structure as had the presence of heavy machinery on center floors.

Laborers were reported visible throughout all six floors of the building moments before the catastrophe. Yeung Chi-kwong, director of the factory, refused to comment publicly on the management decision, stating that many questions remained in need of clarification.

After a 75-hour rescue effort revealed 160 injured survivors, Zhuhai authorities demolished the remains of the factory with explosives, the stated purpose being to prevent further accidents. A 500-meter area was sealed off by the People's Liberation Army and a news blackout imposed during the operation.

In a "final site briefing" given June 21 authorities estimated "about twenty" workers still missing. A newspaper in Macau reported that the whereabouts of as many as 200 workers were unknown. The factory employed over 2,000.

Speaking before the International Labor Organization in Geneva, Han Dongfang, exiled founder of the Beijing Autonomous Workers Federation, told of industrial hazards constantly threatening rural Chinese factory workers, the routine exploitation of 30 million migrant workers employed by foreign-funded enterprises and the failure of official trade unions to offer protection. In the past year tens of thousands of Chinese workers have taken to the streets in protest of labor conditions and, he said, an already simmering situation has reached "a boiling point."

—Tesla Coil

Jackson, Miss.—It is nearly a year since IUE President Bywater and Hood Furniture's owner, Warren Hood, signed a secret agreement to force us into a local union we did not want and make us work under a contract we refused to accept. We are still together, still fighting. We will never accept this crooked deal.

They tried to force us to leave the union we fought four years to have, Local 282, and tried to get us to join Local 797, a white-run local. Thurstin Blue, from Local 797, comes to the plant to meet with us and tell us to join his local, but he has no support. He lies and says that Willie Rudd, the President of Local 282, wants us to join Local 797. He disrespected us and Rudd by signing this contract. If you read it, you see that it allows Hood to do anything they want to do to us.

There are 350 workers at Hood Furniture now. They hire new workers nearly every day because people are fired constantly. New hires come in at \$4.45, even in the hardest jobs, and they don't get a raise for 60 days.

The worst thing is this "point system" that is in the contract. If you total up 8 "points," you are fired. If you are absent, it's 1 point. If you are absent and don't call in by 11:00 a.m., it's 1½ points. If you are forced to work Saturday overtime and you don't make it, it's 1½ points. Certain people are shown favoritism, but the rest of us are just a step away from being fired.

Bywater thought he would get dues from 350 workers, but fewer than 20 workers are dues-paying members of Local 797. We are boycotting it. The contract expires on Aug. 4, 1995, and we will hold out as long as they will.

It seems like no one will help us. Warren Hood is one of the most powerful men in Mississippi; he is president of Deposit Guaranty Bank. Bywater is big in the AFL-CIO. They have a lot of power. We are appealing to all our friends in labor and civil rights for help. We need the truth to be told about how they are abusing us in Jackson, Mississippi.

—Hood Furniture workers

To get in touch with Somerville Mills workers and Hood Furniture workers, write to Furniture Workers Local 282, 1254 Lamar, Suite 212, Memphis, TN 38104.

Getting Cat back on track

Montgomery, Ill.—What's the difference between this strike against Caterpillar and two years ago? That one was over contract bargaining. This strike is over Cat's unfair labor practices. At this plant, one guy was fired for kicking cars off scabs 2½ years ago. It wasn't even on company property. Three others were fired from that period, too. They have fired a United Auto Workers (UAW) committeeman and a union rep. Cat still hasn't brought any of them back.

Cat has had 92 unfair labor practice complaints since the last strike. For two years we have been working without a contract. We are the only thing that's union in there now. We tried to do something about this situation. The Aurora plant has been on strike three times since the companywide strike in 1992. Caterpillar plants have gone out nine times altogether.

Without a contract, health and safety grievances just weren't getting anywhere, so we had to go outside to get help. OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) came in and imposed a big fine against Cat. Cat has been bringing in outside contractors. One of them moved a welding machine, and they didn't set it up right. As a result a welder was electrocuted. He didn't die, but he is still disabled.

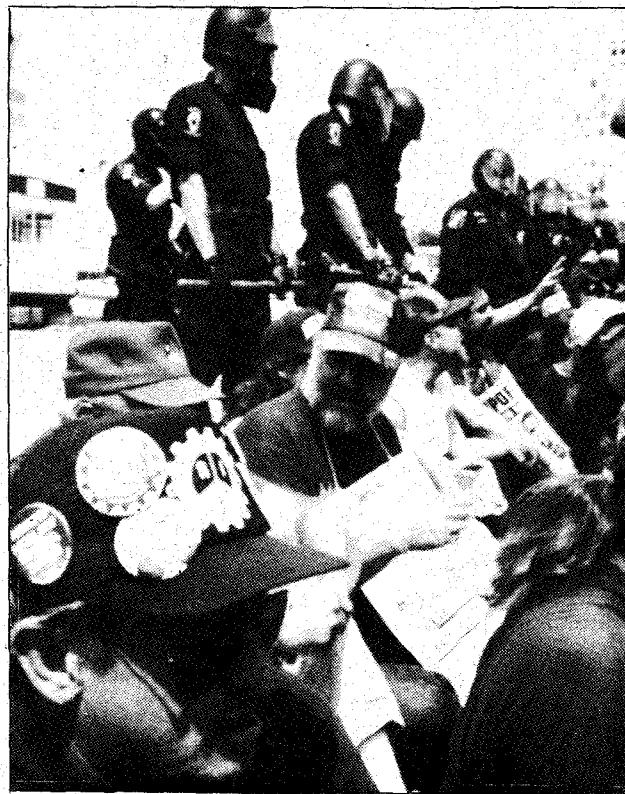
Caterpillar had 8,000 people here years ago. At the time of the strike in 1992 we had 5,600 people, and now it's down to 1,900. Many of the losses are due to attrition, but all along whenever they bring in a new robot, four jobs are lost.

Caterpillar won't say openly that they're trying to break the union, but when the talks broke down, Cat put up a sign at the gate. It said that when you enter this gate, you leave behind your right to strike. Cat has been hiring people—they can't say they are replacing us—and someone crossed the picket line to go in. One of the foremen got carried away and told him, "You're my property now. I control you." He worked for four hours and left.

What's amusing is the company keeps saying "Detroit" (the location of UAW International headquarters) is the union. Sure Detroit sanctioned the strike, but we're the union. The Caterpillar locals in Peoria, Decatur and others didn't wait for the strike deadline and walked out early. Does that sound like the International union tells us what to do?

—Caterpillar worker

Staley rally, sitdown mark one-year lockout



News & Letters

Editor's note: Members of AIW/UPIU (Allied Industrial Workers/United Paperworkers International Union) Local 7837 observed the one-year anniversary of being locked out by sitting down at the West Gate of their employer, A.E. Staley Manufacturing Company. The action concluded a regional solidarity rally June 25 that brought together coal miners, striking Caterpillar workers, Firestone workers, other workers and supporters.

Decatur, Ill.—The rally and the sitdown were a solid show of people who are behind us and against the lockout. Everyone on the line at the West Gate was sitting with their backs towards the police, waiting for arrests. The next thing I know, the police were hitting people with pepper gas. No one was charging the police. So why gas us?

Staley ran a full-page ad in the Herald & Review newspaper here in Decatur. Staley says we would rather rally and make speeches than negotiate. We do that because we want the community to know what Staley is up to. We have already proved to the community that we are here to stay. The police proved that they could only address the rally with bayonets strapped to their legs and armed with pepper gas.

—Staley worker

We brought a lot of people in and got the attention we were looking for. As far as organized labor groups, there were not as many as I expected. The president of an international union isn't concerned with one small segment. When we are being picked off one by one, they give us a little support, but not enough.

—Black unionist

Should it have been like this sooner? Should we have done this a year ago—sitting down, getting arrested, getting help? This has been on my mind because I believe the union leaders should have gone out on strike when PATCO was fired by Reagan.

—Woman Local 7837 member

A group of us in Local 7837 founded the Black Community Awareness Committee. We planned the community rally on April 9, which was the anniversary of Dr. King's visit to Memphis to help the sanitation workers. A month after the rally we had a picnic to celebrate what we had done. We wore our "Locked Out" shirts and left at 9:30 when the park closes.

We learned later that we had been charged with picketing in a residential area, but there were no picket signs. They even changed the park to "restricted" after the picnic so we couldn't have any more.

—Black Local 7837 members

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

example of where that had led in the 1860s: "In England women are still occasionally used instead of horses for hauling canal boats, because the labor required to produce horses and machines is an accurately known quantity, while that required to maintain women of the surplus-population is below all calculation."

That there is, from the capitalist point of view, a "surplus-population" in the U.S. is evidenced every time my supervisor calls a temporary agency and within 45 minutes has 30 more workers on the floor. The only "compulsion" this society is under, given the tragic state of our labor movement, is to pay the minimum wage of \$4.25 an hour. That comes to \$8,840 a year if you work 40 hours every week.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a 25-member group of industrially "advanced" nations, this June issued a report on unemployment. "The debate on jobs has been between the European approach of keeping wages high while unemployment rises and the American approach of creating jobs at all costs, even if wages fall. The report generally concluded that the American approach is better..." (Chicago Tribune, June 8, 1994). Official unemployment in the U.S. is 6%; in the European Union, 11.7%.

OECD recommendations include: "adopting flexible working times, such as part-time work...; discouraging minimum wages...; permitting job-creation programs at below-average wage levels..." (The New York Times, June 8, 1994). Further, "Wages should be allowed to fall when necessary, it said, noting that 'low-wage jobs are bad jobs only when people become trapped in them.'"

The workers' movement in Marx's day fought to shorten the working day to prevent the capitalists killing them off through overwork. Isn't it time for today's labor movement to take up the cause of low-wage, part-time and temporary workers before the capitalists kill them off through starvation and homelessness and "ending welfare as we know it"?

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya Marxist-Humanist Archives

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

*Editor's note: At a time when Black intellectuals, policy makers and community activists are searching for a comprehensive analysis of the social crises besetting Black America, some have taken advantage of the fact that 1994 marks the 50th anniversary of the publication of Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* to return to that massive two-volume work on the Black dimension of American "civilization." As a contribution to the current discussion and assessment of the "Myrdal project," we publish excerpts of the review that Raya Dunayevskaya wrote 50 years ago as *An American Dilemma* was coming off the press (all pagination in the text is to the original 1944 edition). The full text of Dunayevskaya's critique of Myrdal and the Black intellectuals who worked on the four-year-long project was titled "Negro Intellectuals in Dilemma" and originally appeared in *The New Internationalist* (November 1944). It can be found in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, #271-74.*

Over four years were needed to complete this study. It is a product not only of the Swedish scholar, Gunnar Myrdal, and his two associates, Richard Sterner and Arnold Rose, but of some seventy-five intellectuals, both white and Negro, who gave full or part time to the gathering and analysis of data....The Myrdal work comprises the most comprehensive [studies] thus far produced on the subject, and makes it possible to clear our shelves of many of the earlier volumes on this topic. This assertion, which has been made by the Negro intellectuals in their reviews of *An American Dilemma*, is not, however, repeated by the present reviewer as unqualified praise of the book. On the contrary, that this work makes such a clearing possible is only further testimony as to the paucity of adequate books on the subject. There is not a single outstanding work dealing with the Negro problem "in general," although there are good studies of specific facets of the Negro problem. In the present research we get an over-all view of the entire field....

MYRDAL'S 'VALUE PREMISES'

The present study was projected by [the Carnegie Corporation] which sank over a quarter of a million dollars into the venture. So prejudiced are the American "social scientists" that, in order to get the facts on the Negro problem impartially set down, the corporation found that it would need to engage a foreign scholar. Not accidentally, however, its search for one unprejudiced in racial questions ended when it found one who was anti-Marxist in political outlook. Mr. Myrdal's anti-Marxism colors his approach to the entire work as well as to his co-workers. Mr. Myrdal's insistence on the invalidity of the Marxian theory shows that he knows quite well where the "main enemy" is and who his sponsor is.

Mr. Myrdal denies that "the economic factor" is the primary one in the development of society, or rather, in the existence of the Negro problem. To him the Negro problem is a moral problem arising out of the conflict between the "American creed," that all men are created equal, and the American reality, in which the Negro minority is so unjustly treated. However, it is clear from the 1,000-odd pages of text, that, if the Negro problem is in the "mind and heart" of America, it has nevertheless a most solid economic foundation, and it is precisely the chapters that deal with the economic foundation that are the best in the two volumes. A particularly admirable job was done with the section on the Negro laborer. That section was under the general direction of Mr. Sterner, who also is the author of the appendix relating to this section. This appendix is entitled "Pre-War Conditions of the Negro Wage Earner in Selected Industries and Occupations." It deals both with the industries in which the Negroes are the predominant labor force, lumber milling, fertilizer manufacturing, turpentine farming, etc., and with the industry which practically excludes any Negro labor, the major Southern industry, textiles. From it we also get a glimpse of the difference between the conditions in a non-unionized industry and a unionized one. In turpentine farming the Negro earns little more than \$200 a year and some forms of peonage are still extant. In mining, however, the worker gets comparatively high wages, being unionized in the United Mine Workers, where no discrimination exists. In fact, even in Alabama, the Negro union member talks as freely as the white union member, and the local union itself is generally administered by a white president and a Negro vice-president.

The study of the Negro worker is preceded by an examination of the plight of the Negro share-cropper. The chapters on Negro and Southern agriculture are on as competent a level as those on the Negro in industry. Anyone who has entertained any illusions as to what the New Deal meant to the poor farmers, white and Negro, in the semi-feudal conditions of the South, will have them quickly dispelled by the accumulated weight of evidence. This shows that the governmental agricultural policies had graver consequences in uprooting the Negro farmer than soil erosion, the boll weevil and the Southwestern shift of cotton culture combined.

The above citations indicate that the value of *An American Dilemma* does not reside in its "value premises" but in the fact that it offers up-to-date informational summaries of the economic, legal and social status of the Negro in America....

It is [in the South] that the contradiction between the "American creed" and the economic reality is sharpest.



Intellectuals who commented on or critiqued the Myrdal study (clockwise from upper right corner): Charles S. Johnson, L.D. Reddick, W.E.B. DuBois, Ralph Bunche, and George S. Schuyler.

It is therefore not at all surprising that it is there that the contradiction between Mr. Myrdal, the scholar with "value premises," and Mr. Myrdal, the "social scientist," becomes not only acute but ludicrous.

Mr. Myrdal, the scholar, writes that with the entrenchment of slavery in the South, the blackout on independent thinking was so overwhelming that Southern thought to this day suffers from lack of free intercourse with the varied currents of thought since the early nineteenth century. "...The region is exceptional in Western non-fascist civilization since the Enlightenment in that it lacks every trace of radical thought. In the South all progressive thinking going further than mild liberalism has been practically non-existent for a century" (page 469).

IN PLACE OF A CHALLENGE A WHIMPER

Mr. Myrdal, the scholar, further demonstrates that the war, which has increased the militancy of the Negro, has scared these Southern white liberals into an outright reactionary position. They would not continue their cooperation with the Negro intellectuals against discrimination unless the latter accepted, nay, avowed, social segregation. So benighted is that region that the following passed for the words of a liberal! It is Mark Etheridge, ex-chairman of the FEPC, [Fair Employment Practices Committee] who writes in July, 1942:

There is no power in the world—not even the mechanized armies of the earth, the Allied and the Axis—which can now force the Southern white people to the abandonment of social segregation. It is a cruel disillusionment, bearing germs of strife and perhaps tragedy, for any of their [Negroes'] leaders to tell them that they can expect it, or that they can exact it, as the price of their participation in the war.

This, then, is the "American creed" when expressed in Southern lingo. What happens now to the scholar's "value premise," that the Negro is entitled to full participation in American democracy? Overboard goes the scholar and out emerges the "social scientist," who turns out to be a bourgeois politician. Mr. Myrdal, the "social scientist," begins to appeal to his Southern bourgeois brethren. Since, says Mr. Myrdal, the good bourgeois, "changes should, if possible, not be made by sudden upheavals but in gradual steps" (page 518), the South had better start enfranchising its Negro citizens now. Mr. Myrdal pleads that this "is truly a conservative" conclusion. And just to prove to the Southern bourgeois that it is not a wild-haired Marxist who is asking them to take this plunge, he writes that they can, to begin with, start enfranchising "the higher strata of the Negro population" (page 519). The appeal of the "social scientist" is not a challenge; it is a whimper.

Here you have the political formula of this massive work in a nutshell! Here is a scholar who has digested the major part of the available literature on the subject of the Negro problem, who has conducted field studies and case histories, all of which lead him to uphold "value premises" that demand the full participation of the Negro in all aspects of American life, who holds no brief for intellectual Uncle Tomism of either Negro or white variety, who says the South is as backward intellectually as economically, that its ignorance is, in fact, unique in non-fascist Western civilization, and yet so bourgeois is he that his class instinct prevails upon him to produce so impotent, so ludicrous a "solution" as to turn the American tragedy into a Swedish farce!...

THE TREASON OF THE INTELLECTUALS

One might have supposed that the Negro intellectuals would arise one and all in criticism of *An American Dilemma*. But any such supposition is, unfortunately, quite unfounded. Mr. Du Bois, for example, who considers the "acculturation of the masses" to be the task of the "talented tenth," did not consider it the task of the "talented tenth" to criticize a work saddled with so much high-brow talk and so little high or low-brow action. On the contrary, he considered it to be a "monumental and unrivalled study" whose scientific approach should be emulated (*Phylon*, second quarter, 1944). In general, the Negro press met the work with paeans of praise. A sadder commentary yet on the state of the Negro intelligentsia than the Negro press is the manner in which Mr. Myrdal

Revisiting An American Dilemma, 50 years later

got from it its staff members. These intellectuals were at his beck and call at all times, although some of them seem to be so far to the left of him as to be on the opposite side of the fence. Mr. Myrdal's chief complaint against them is that they have been influenced by Marxism. Consider, then, the case of Charles S. Johnson, who has been so influenced and who considers the Negro problem to be rooted in economic factors. During the extensive Negro migrations northward in the period of World War I, Mr. Johnson saw the solution to the Negro problem in the urbanization and proletarianization of the Negro which, more or less automatically, would shift the problem from a racial to a class plane. When the depression interrupted the continuity of this development, Mr. Johnson seemed to rely upon the impact of the crisis to cause such an upheaval in the Southern economy as to unseat King Cotton. When the AAA [Agriculture Adjustment Administration] pumped some subsidies into cotton culture and propped up the collapsing regime of cotton tenancy, Mr. Johnson still had his eyes on some "automatic" economic revolution to be caused by the introduction of the mechanical cotton picker. Mr. Johnson the scholar seemed blissfully unaware of the significance of the political alliance of the New Deal-Wall Street North with the bourgeois semi-feudal South. Or perhaps not so much unaware as unwilling to give up the quiet of an academic chair for the hubbub of mass activity which would "induce" the "economic" revolution. Yet he continued to write radical words:

The acuteness of the industrial and relief situation in the cities of the North will find white and Negro unemployed making their demands together. There is, however, one disturbing possibility. It is that the anti-Semitism generated in Europe, in response to a hopelessly depressed economic situation, will find in the urban Negro an emotional scapegoat. In this event anything can happen.

Every so often in the works of Mr. Johnson one finds a situation described so lucidly that the revolutionary answer to "anything can happen" seems clear enough. But it is never stated in so many words. The reason lies partly in the fact that the majority of the research projects or economic and social analyses regarding the Negro have white guardian angels in the form of some bourgeois fund, whether it is Carnegie, or Rockefeller, or Rosenwald, or the government. It is only natural that the studies stop short of their implicit conclusions, if indeed the professors ever breathe the conclusions even to themselves and thus jeopardize the comfort of the academic chair....

BUNCHE AND REDDICK

The sorriest spectacle of the Negro "talented tenth" is presented by Ralph Bunche. Mr. Bunche is critical not only of the economic, political and social status of the Negro, but of all existing Negro organizations that strive to ameliorate this condition. He calls them "philosophic and programmatic paupers." He is critical likewise of all Negro leaders who, he says, "think and act entirely in a black groove." In his pamphlet, *A World View of Race*, he even comes up with a solution to the Negro problem:

The Negro must develop, therefore, a consciousness of class interest and purpose and must strive for an alliance with the white working class in a common struggle for economic and political equality and justice.

Yet this most radical of radicals found it permissible to shelve his more radical conclusions in the Schomburg Collection, while his research data is used by Mr. Myrdal for his own conservative ends. This is not at all accidental. Mr. Bunche's revolutionary thunder is no more than radicalism of the chair....

Of the Negro intellectuals who have reviewed the Myrdal volumes, the only critic so far has been L.D. Reddick, curator of the Schomburg Collection. Mr. Reddick has written two reviews, one for the *Journal of Negro Education*, spring, 1944, and the other for *Opportunity*. In both reviews he offers three criticisms of the book. He rejects Mr. Myrdal's sociological concept of caste. He shows himself aware of the weaknesses of the historical sections of the book; and he is critical of Mr. Myrdal's solution. The best thing in the reviews is his recognition that the ultimate solution of the Negro question is along class lines. However, the way in which Mr. Reddick phrases this is extremely significant. He writes: "Finally, Dr. Myrdal is unduly pessimistic over the possibilities of Negro and white workers uniting and struggling together for common goals." If Mr. Myrdal is unduly pessimistic, it is clear that Mr. Reddick is not unduly optimistic.

Thus far we have not considered George S. Schuyler, who in the past has done one of the finest reportorial jobs in popularizing the CIO to the Negro workers and the Negro community as a whole. Mr. Schuyler for some time has shown himself a believer in managerial society. He condemns both sides of the war as imperialist. He has turned away from the revolutionary movement, but retains some Marxism. It is not surprising that, although he considers the Myrdal book a superior work, he is cynical of any solutions. In his review of the book in the July issue of *Politics* he writes: "He [Mr. Myrdal] is modest enough to predict no solution, for the problem may well be insoluble."

THE GARVEY MOVEMENT

This brings us to one of the most significant omissions of this book. If even Mr. Myrdal is unaware of the Populist movement, no one who thinks of the Negro question

(Continued on page 11)

THE OBJECTIVITY OF PHILOSOPHY IN TODAY'S WORLD CRISES

(continued from page 1)

strategic outlook of this stage of capital accumulation.

This restructuring is not peculiar to the U.S., but is a global development. As the Marxist urban sociologist Manuel Castells noted, "More often than not, the theory of capitalist restructuring has missed the specificity of the process of transformation in each area of the world, as well as the variation of the cultural and political factors that shape the process of economic restructuring, and ultimately determine its outcome. Thus the de-industrialization processes of New York and London take place at the same time that a wave of industrialization of historic proportions occurs in China and in the Asian Pacific."¹

One of the main problems facing the capitalist restructuring in the U.S. is the speculative bubble supporting it. The pin that threatens to burst it is the hidden unemployment of workers too discouraged to look for work and part-time workers wanting full-time jobs who are counted as employed. The real rate of unemployment is actually double that of the 7.5% official rate. Such unforeseen phenomena as a "jobless recovery" and other non-cyclical "surprises" do not escape Marx's Absolute General Law of Capitalist Accumulation, wherein each new increase in productivity is inextricably linked to an ever-growing and permanent army of the unemployed.

Although capitalist ideologues are now extolling the 3.2% growth rate of the last four quarters, they fail to mention the growth rate of only 0.11% for the previous four years. Both capitalist ideologues and their critics are confusing a cyclical upturn with a long-term declining trend in the economy.

This is having the same effect on today's Left as the rise of imperialism had on Marxists at the turn of the century. In that era the phenomenal appearance of imperialist superprofits and monopolistic restructuring led Marxists such as Rosa Luxemburg to theorize about unlimited capital accumulation, unmindful of the long-term tendency of the rate of profit to decline which culminated in the Great Depression. It is all the more remarkable then that today's Left, which certainly recognizes the social crises created by capitalist restructuring, has nevertheless decided that revolutionary socialism is impossible to attain and that Marxism is "passee."

The opposite of the present stage of capitalist restructuring lies in the new organizational forms assumed by today's mass struggles. Whether restructuring has meant de-industrialization or re-industrialization, a new despotic discipline of capital over labor has elicited broad social and democratic impulses from the working class that cannot be comprehended except in Marxian terms.

In both the North and South many of the struggles go unreported, whether it be protests by Black workers at construction sites in Chicago and the organizing of "Justice for Janitors" in the North, or the battles against sweatshop conditions in the Delta Pride Catfish plants in the South.

As we have shown this year in *News & Letters*, especially significant in these struggles is the role of women. In the South a new generation of militant, articulate young Black women has arisen who have organized their own shops "from the inside" and do not shy away from confronting anyone—management or union. Nor do they shy away from asking how they can keep their new organizations from becoming co-opted, as so many have before.

An in-plant organizer and chief steward at the Indianola, Mississippi, Delta Pride Catfish plant measured the success or failure of their long struggle for a union contract: "I feel we fought to get a darn good contract. The only problem is with the wage scale. I had in my heart that we would show the company that this is the time we would end these poverty wages. We didn't do that. I ask myself how you know whether you've done the right thing."²

1. Manuel Castells, "European Cities, the Information Society, and the Global Economy," *New Left Review* 204, March/April 1994, p. 19.

2. These and other voices of Southern labor have been recorded in *News & Letters*. See especially the issues of November and December 1993 and April and July 1994, as well as this issue pp. 2-3.

Internal to the new social consciousness emerging in today's labor struggles is a search for ideas and perspectives which can help the effort to create alternative forms of organization avoid the impasse which has confronted so many of the freedom struggles of our time. The urgency of responding to this search is underlined by the events of the last year in both Mexico and South Africa.

B. From Chiapas to South Africa

There is no question that the ongoing revolt in Chiapas, Mexico, has brought forth new forms of struggle and organization. As against the elitist concepts of "focoism" and "vanguardism," the Zapatista revolt, by being deeply rooted in the struggles of the indigenous peoples of Chiapas, has given birth to a new kind of broad-based, grassroots movement. Its impact has reverberated throughout Mexico, as seen in the emergence of spontaneous land seizures and peasant revolts elsewhere in Mexico and in intense discussions on the need for alternative forms of organization throughout the country. Its impact inside Chiapas can be measured by the way the Zapatistas have helped put an end to arranged marriages and the sale of women in the areas under their control.

On June 11 the Zapatistas rejected a proposed government "peace" settlement and called instead for a "National Democratic Convention" of Indians, peasants, students, workers, women and intellectuals, and a constituent assembly to draw up a new constitution along with a provisional government to call for new elections.

Implicit in this appeal to the broad mass of social forces



Opposition candidate Cardenas visits the Zapatistas.

that are being marginalized further by the current capitalist restructuring is the recognition that the unity of capitalist politics and economics has meant not less, but more oppression of the masses.

When opposition political leader Cardenas finally went to Chiapas during his presidential election campaign on May 21, the Zapatistas made him wait for five hours in the sun and then listen to five more hours of speeches before agreeing to meet with him. Despite Cardenas' Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) having received a fresh influx of leftist intellectuals and activists, the difference between the PRD and Mexico's ruling party (the Institutional Revolutionary Party), when it comes to economic policy and the practice of democracy, is not at all self-evident to the Zapatistas.

What is self-evident is that the Zapatista revolt is challenging the way the Left has increasingly allowed "actually existing capitalism" to define the horizons of its thinking. The crucial question is whether this will now become inseparable from the projection of the idea of revolutionary socialism for our life and times, freed from the narrowness and distortions which have plagued post-Marx Marxism.

That this remains the truly critical issue is shown by the outcome of the elections in South Africa. The mass outpouring for Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC) represented nothing short of a revolution against the legacy of over 300 years of white domination. Yet many revolutionary intellectuals like Neville Alexander continue to labor under the illusory notion that "the more radical the democratic project can be within the limits of capitalism...the better for us, the better for the nation-building and the socialist project."³

3. See *Work in Progress*, November 1993.

What explains this crisis in socialist theory which seeks the marriage of markets and the "radical democracy" of civil society? What explains the Left's rationalization of the party-state formation as existing outside any historic imperative to overthrow it? What explains the fetishism for organizing civil society under the hegemony of a "democracy" defined by that very same party-state formation?

South Africa has brought these questions to a head because there a modicum of state power is being bought at the cost of the withering away of the liberation movement itself.

What has gone unreported during the year-long runup to the April 26-29 elections is the emergence and expansion of many grassroots organizations. They will have to come to terms with their own recent history of succumbing to the political dictates of the ANC which now presides over an eco-



nom system scarcely changed from what these grassroots organizations had vigorously opposed.

The problem is that in civil society coming under the "structural adjustments" of the ANC-National Party alignment, an emerging "culture of negotiation and compromise" has appeared in place of one "driven by mass mobilization and confrontation." It is a political-economic restructuring that sees trade unions now cooperating with management in tripartite talks between capital, labor, and the state.

What is being "restructured" out of the hands of the masses is seen most dramatically at the point of production, as the new ANC-led state will be joining the drive to increase productivity for market competition. The instrument of the retrogressive restructuring is the "Reconstruction and Development Program" (RDP) put forward by the ANC, the South African Communist Party, and the leading trade-union federation, COSATU.

As two COSATU Left dissidents wrote, "The political arithmetic, when it comes to paying for the RDP, is clear. It is wage restraints + strict monetary policies + eternal cooperative partnership between capital and labor + achieving higher levels of profitability + government expenditure within existing constraints = the workers will pay."⁴

Rank-and-file workers and shop floor leaders have been vocal in opposition to COSATU's concurrence with the ANC's plan to balance the economy on the backs of the workers. But it is the unemployed township youth who represent the most crucial flashpoint for renewed spontaneous outbreaks.

C. Back to the homefront: two years after the Los Angeles rebellion

Because the unemployed inner-city youth in the U.S. represent a crucial flashpoint for renewed spontaneous outbreaks here at home, we need to turn to the continuing ramifications of the Los Angeles rebellion of two years ago.

As against the slanderous assertions of Left ideologues like Cornel West that the 1992 revolt was "barbaric," we have defended the political content of the insurrection inas-

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4. *South African Labour Bulletin* 17 (5), September-October 1993, p. 86.

HOW TO BEGIN ANEW

Discover the historic-philosophic ground for projecting the idea of "revolution in permanence" for the 1990s.

"The whole question of the relationship of any ongoing event with the past with the very concept of Archives, depends on the two opposite words—continuity and discontinuity. Whereas only great divides in epochs, in cognition, in personality are crucial and may relate to turning points in history, no discontinuity can really achieve that type of new epochal 'moment' unless it has established continuity with the historic course of human development."

—Raya Dunayevskaya, 1986

To order these books by Raya Dunayevskaya, see page 12.

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"What I hear Dunayevskaya saying above all is that we have reached the point in history where real freedom is attainable, if we are willing to commit ourselves to a more inclusive definition of freedom than has ever been attempted."

—Adrienne Rich

THE OBJECTIVITY OF PHILOSOPHY IN TODAY'S WORLD CRISES

(continued from page 5)

much as it represented the self-conscious action of the victims of a decade of Reagan retrogression. In stripping the ideological fetish from U.S. democracy, the rebellion showed a determination on the part of the Black mind to know itself as the vanguard of the struggle to transform American society.

Yet the spontaneous nature of the L.A. rebellion continues to confound the Left, both because of its failure to confront the Black question in the U.S. and its view that the L.A. rebellion "lacked organization." So long as the Left is unable to face the Black question in the U.S., it remains ignorant of the dialectic of U.S. social development in which democracy has always served as the outer appearance of America's authoritarian inner core.

As against this, we have listened carefully to the voices and reason of the new subjects of revolution. Speaking at a community meeting commemorating the L.A. rebellion, Teresa Allison, founder of "Mothers ROC (Reclaiming Our Children)," declared, "We have to think, to take the streets and march because the mind is what they [the police] are afraid of."⁵

It is true that the L.A. rebellion has not yet given rise to an organized movement but rather to modest organizational forms such as Mothers ROC, the L.A. 4+ Committee, and new community newspapers such as *Voices of Cabrini* which consistently editorialize against the police sweeps of Chicago housing projects. And yet the organizational steps taken before and after the L.A. rebellion intimate the kind of national consciousness which Frantz Fanon held was not narrow nationalism but had an international dimension.

The L.A. gang truce signed three days before the rebellion was called the Unification Treaty Guaranteeing Free Passage Throughout Watts, modeled after the 1949 Egypt-Israel peace accord. There are also many references to the rebellion being an *Intifada*. Mothers ROC and the L.A. 4+ Committee, much like the mothers in El Salvador and Argentina, organized around disappeared or incarcerated loved ones and family members. Moreover, new self-organized initiatives have become necessary to resolve internal conflicts in the Black and Latino communities.

As Raegan Kelly wrote in *urb* (August 1993), the success of today's post-rebellion organizations can be attributed to: "1) an ongoing and open dialogue, and 2) the communal, or essentially headless organization from within—within the hood, within the mind."

What the new social consciousness finds in this regard is that it is the latest form in which the Idea of Freedom accomplishes its *self-organization*. The dialectic of the L.A. rebellion discloses that by virtue of its lack of a demonstra-

5. See *News & Letters*, June 1994.

ble organizational form, the social consciousness arising from it can only satisfy its philosophic needs and thus conserve itself through the self-organization of the Idea of Freedom.



Los Angeles mothers denounce system of injustice.

The Left, however, has shifted the entire task of philosophically clarifying this new social consciousness onto the shoulders of the masses whom it at the same time declares to be no longer revolutionary. The Left in fact increasingly assigns the task of democratization to the state-capitalist economy whose current restructuring is anything but democratic—as testified by that area which is becoming the center of the world economy, China and the Pacific rim.

II. China's new 'Great Leap Forward': A bubble inside the boom

A. The Pacific rim as center of world politics

The dispute between the U.S. and North Korea over the Clinton administration's insistence that it scrap its nuclear weapons program reveals the extent to which events in East Asia have now become the fulcrum of U.S. foreign policy.

Clinton's conflict with North Korea may seem at odds with his effort to disengage from further military intervention in areas such as Somalia and Bosnia. The debacle in Somalia left such a bad taste in his mouth that he no longer speaks of using U.S. troops for "humanitarian" purposes overseas. He has therefore totally ignored the slaughter in Rwanda, refusing to send even token humanitarian aid. He is also trying to "disengage" from Bosnia by forcing the Bosnians to accept a Franco-Russian plan which partitions their country along ethnic lines. What we pointed to from the start of Bosnia's struggle—the complicity of the U.S. in Serbia's genocidal attempt to destroy Bosnia's multi-ethnic heritage—has become starkly evident.⁶

The U.S. policy toward Bosnia is not just a "Balkan question," but is the measure of what really guides U.S. policy on a world scale—including toward an area like North Korea. Clinton is not concerned with North Korea because of its human rights abuses and totalitarian control over its citizens. He is concerned with North Korea because no U.S. ruler wants to see a source of instability in the one part of the world which is generating serious economic growth—the Pacific rim. As his recent decision to uncouple the renewal of China's Most Favored Nation (MFN) trading status from progress on human rights shows, the only "value" guiding U.S. policy in East Asia is its effort to protect the "healthy investment climate" which its underpaid labor provides for U.S. corporations.

Clinton's threat to impose sanctions against North Korea because of its refusal to abandon its nuclear program, however, has itself proved to be quite destabilizing. Though the Western rulers certainly want to prevent North Korea's Kim Il Sung from getting nuclear weapons, they do not want his regime to totally collapse as they fear the instability that would trigger throughout the area. Clinton is therefore still trying to arrange a negotiated settlement to the conflict.

However, the determination of North Korea's Stalinist old guard to save face, and the determination of the U.S. to project its prowess in an area deemed "vital to our national interests" makes for a volatile combination which could still lead to war.

The crucial factor in all of this remains China. Whatever Clinton wants vis-a-vis North Korea, he certainly does not want to take any action which would jeopardize relations with China, whose economic expansion (along with that of Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Taiwan) is helping to fuel what little real growth is occurring in today's world economy. Clinton has gone out of his way to avoid offending the Chinese leaders on almost anything, as his decision on MFN showed.

China will remain the critical issue in U.S. foreign policy for some time, as the Clinton administration certainly knows that developments in post-Deng Xiaoping China (Deng is now 89) could prove far more destabilizing than any threat emanating from North Korea. We therefore need to take a closer look at the nature of the "Chinese economic miracle" which has so beguiled today's Western rulers.

B. Whither China?

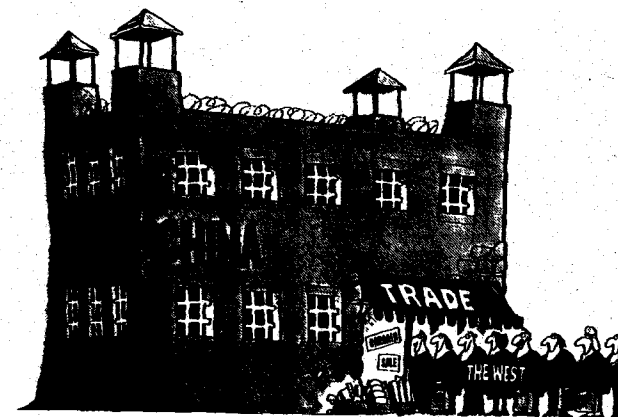
The figures being reported about China's "booming" economy may sound impressive, given the stagnant state of the U.S. and world economy. Who else can boast a 13% annual economic growth rate and a 21% growth rate in indus-

trial output over the past year? This economic expansion is being fueled by massive foreign investment—\$20 billion in new investments from overseas in 1993 alone. Thousands of foreign-owned firms are now operating in China with total contract investment exceeding \$200 billion.

But does this mean world capital has reached the point of being able to industrially develop China? To answer that, we need to face some basic realities.

To whatever extent China is undergoing a "massive economic expansion," it is not characteristic of the country as a whole but is strictly a regional phenomenon. While the economies of coastal areas like Guangdong and Fujian provinces are growing at rates of 27% a year, the vast interior is either languishing or falling backward. As in earlier periods, the rapid economic growth of some of the coastal areas is being generated by slave labor-like conditions in urban industry and the expropriation of China's peasantry which constitutes 75% of its population.

Declining living conditions and rising unemployment in the rural areas have uprooted tens of millions of peasants, cre-



ating a migrant labor populace of over 100 million roaming the country in search of work. As a result of such dislocations as well as major environmental destruction, almost 10% of the country's farmland has been taken out of cultivation in the last several years. According to official government figures, China loses enough farmland each year to feed 40 million people.

As the dissident journalist Liu Binyan wrote in *China Focus* (October 1993), "The plight of China's peasantry can be traced to Stalin's theories about the process of socialist construction. Without colonies to strip, where do you get the capital needed to accelerate industrialization? Stalin's blunt answer was 'strip the peasantry,' and China has been doing just that since 1953."

Herein lies the continuity of today's "free market reforms" with Mao's legacy. As Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S., showed in her analyses of Mao's China, Mao never questioned the idea that reducing the laborer to a component part of capital prevails under "socialism"; like Stalin, he held that the capitalist law of value was fully compatible with the "new society."⁷ In the face of China's "backwardness," Mao advocated the use of forced labor to create what Marxists had always called "the primitive accumulation of capital." It was the underlying "principle" of his "Great Leap Forward" of 1958-59.

This is likewise the principle underlying China's would-be "Great Leap Forward" of today. Of course, a crucial difference separates Mao's efforts to "make one day equal 20 years" and today's "economic boom": As against Mao's illusion that China could develop through its own internal resources under the command of "Mao Thought," the current rulers realize that the primitive accumulation of capital can-

not be sustained without opening China to foreign capital and technology. As one commentator put it, "If Mao had not imposed a repressive system from which Chinese workers are still emerging, much of today's [corporate] pleasure in having low-paid work could not be counted on."⁸

The working conditions in the multinational factories operating in China's coastal provinces are clear enough: 14-hour days, seven-day weeks, no regard given to workers' health and safety, employers withholding workers' ID cards so they cannot look for work elsewhere, and so on. The bulk of the workers in these "free market" sweatshops are women. Child labor is widespread: In the booming Pearl River delta alone, 14,000 factories employ child labor.

And yet, even with all these "economic incentives" provided for multinational corporations, foreign capital is not investing in the country as a whole, but only in specific regions. Nor is this true just of China. More and more, world capital seeks not nations but regional areas for investment, such as the Strait of Malacca linking Malaysia and Indonesia, parts of Vietnam and China's Hainan island, or the Kansai region of Japan. The global shortage of capital drives this selectivity. World capitalism now finds it can generate growth only in relatively small regions, each of which acts as a sponge soaking up capital from the surrounding area.

In China's case the result is an ever-widening gap between "boom" areas and the vast interior, which has become so serious as to threaten to pull China apart. Provincial leaders especially are becoming increasingly assertive—to the extent that some have even begun issuing their own currency. Ironically the more China becomes "integrated" into the world market, the more it begins to undergo internal fragmentation.

At the same time, whatever economic growth is occurring rests upon a most shaky foundation because the bulk of the growth is due not to real internal productive investment, but rather to a burst in speculative capital. Non-productive investment grew 83% in 1993, indicating a "bubble economy" underpinning China's "boom."

The reason for this is twofold. First, the government finds itself forced to provide credit and money to largely bankrupt state enterprises which still employ two-thirds of the workforce. As a result, though investments in the state sector grew by 65% in 1993, this was not met by any corresponding rise in production. The constant government injections of cash into bankrupt state enterprises fuel inflation and lead to a shortage of capital for more "productive" parts of the economy.

The government can hardly act differently, for it fears that allowing state enterprises to close will lead to huge unemployment and a massive workers' revolt. They have good reason to fear. Thousands of illegal strikes and over 200 worker-inspired "riots" were recorded in the last year alone. With the specter of outright revolt haunting China, Communist Party head Jiang Zemin recently called the threat of workers' strikes and revolts "the most important hidden peril" underlying his regime.

Second, the burst in speculative capital is due to the co-existence of state-capitalism with the free market. Thanks to their government connections, the managers of state enterprises have easy credit to government funds. They then use these funds to set up their own privately owned corporations without of course giving up their state positions. They then "sell" the products made in "their" factories to their new privatized concern, often at fantastic markups. The result is an economic "boom" based not on rising production or investment but mere speculation.

In this sense, the developments in China are not as distant from those in Russia as they may appear. There too, the co-existence of a state-capitalist economy that once called itself "Communist" with the "principle" of the free market has allowed the old ruling class to enrich itself in speculative transactions without leading to any real development of the economy. Of course, there is a big difference between Rus-

6. For our analyses of the Bosnian struggle, see *Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western "Civilization"* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1993) and "U.S. and Russia Enter Bosnia Cockpit," *News & Letters*, March 1994.

7. Among Dunayevskaya's many analyses of Mao's China, see especially *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions* (original edition 1959; reprinted with a new introduction 1984), "The Challenge of Mao Tse-Tung" in the 1964 and subsequent editions of *Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until Today*, and "The Thought of Mao" in *Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao*.

8. Perry Link, "The Old Man's New China," *New York Review of Books*, June 9, 1994.

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sia and China—China is experiencing a 20% yearly **increase** in industrial output as against Russia's 20% **decrease**. However, China's increase is not due to any serious growth in domestic capital investment, but rather to foreign capital rushing in to take advantage of cheap labor and an authoritarian state that, unlike Russia, has not undergone fragmentation and near-collapse.⁹

This likewise resonates with the situation facing the "reindustrialized" South USA, where multinational corporations have taken advantage of cheap labor and an authoritarian state—as in Mississippi—to embark on **regional** capital investment. As elsewhere, such investment is quite **ephemeral** as world capital goes in constant search of ever-cheaper sources of labor power.

In a word, the Chinese economy, like the world economy as a whole, is suffering from a shortage of capital. In China this "capital shortage is already a potentially dangerous bottleneck to growth, stunting the creation of new jobs and casting vast migrant populations across the country in search of work."¹⁰

The difficulty China is facing in creating a basis for productive economic development is **not** due to the way its "former" planned economy still supposedly shields it from the law of value dominating the world market. On the contrary, it is precisely the identification of both "planned" and "market" economies with that law of value which explains China's difficulty in overcoming its shortage of capital.

As Marx long ago showed, though capitalism is a system of "production for the sake of production," it does **not** have unlimited capacities for growth. The capitalist surely tries to accumulate capital by reducing the relative magnitude of the variable part of capital, in other words, wages and benefits, compared with the constant part, that is, the means of production, machinery, technology, and so on. "Dead labor" or capital thus dominates living labor more and more. Howev-

9. For our analysis of the developments in Russia, see "Where is Russia Going?" by Peter Hudis in **News & Letters**, January-February 1994.

10. See "Bursting China's Bubble" by Richard Hornick, **Foreign Affairs** 73 (3), May/June 1994, p. 35.

III. Dialectics of philosophy in today's changed world

"Because the transformation of reality is central to the Hegelian dialectic, Hegel's philosophy comes to life, over and over again, in all periods of crisis and transition."

—Raya Dunayevskaya, **Philosophy and Revolution**

A. Can the Idea of revolutionary socialism be reconstituted anew?

The need to spell out the role that a Marxist-Humanist organization can play today flows from the changing nature of today's objective situation. Foremost in this is the way the crises of existing society are leading many to question the talk about "the death of Marxism" as a bit premature.

Even the postmodernist French intellectual Jacques Derrida argues in a recent book that the enduring crises of capitalism call for a reconsideration of Marx's legacy. Though Derrida has his own twist on what it means to revisit "the spectre of Marx," the view that the human imagination needs to envision broader horizons than those of bankrupt "state socialism" and "free market capitalism" is being voiced with greater frequency in today's battle of ideas.

Nor is this restricted to debates between intellectuals. Today's social crises are proving so intractable that the talk of "free market capitalism" as humanity's only available option sounds less and less convincing to masses of people. So dissatisfied are the masses of East Europe in particular, with the reality of the "free market" that the former Communists, now anointed as "democratic socialists," have won recent elections in Lithuania, Poland, and Hungary.

One need hardly add that the "conversion" of former statist bureaucrats into advocates of "a mixed market and planned economy" poses no serious alternative to the bankruptcy of existing society. Though an array of old alternatives are trying to take advantage of a new mode of existence—from former Stalinists parading as "democratic socialists" to former anti-Stalinists jettisoning the very concept of socialism in the name of "radical democracy"—the void in projecting of a liberating alternative to capitalism remains.

To fill this void calls for far more than halfway measures or "a peace treaty with existing needs." It calls for a serious reexamination of the philosophic principles upon which the Marxian concept of social revolution is based.

This is what Raya Dunayevskaya pointed to at the very moment a "changed world" of retrogression emerged in the 1980s. As she wrote in 1987, "The most difficult of all tasks that have confronted every generation of Marxists is to work out what is **Marx's** Marxism for its age; the task has never been more difficult than the one that confronts" us today. That very difficulty, she contended, called for a re-encounter with the work which first projected the revolutionary dialectic in a comprehensive philosophic form—Hegel's **Phenom-**

er, this leaves the capitalist with a smaller proportion of the only substance which can create new value—living labor. The logic of capitalist production, Marx showed, is that even if the capitalist system utilizes the full 24 hours a day of labor without remuneration, it would still reach the point where it cannot reproduce the value of the constant component of capital. Marx put it this way: "The greatest barrier to the self-expansion of capital is capital itself."

This is not theory. This is a **fact** of the world economy. As against those baffled by today's reality because of their failure to grasp the theory of state-capitalism, what prevents Russia and China from achieving a smooth transition to the "free market" is the same thing which prevents the "free market" economies of the West from achieving a smooth transition to significant economic growth. Though the former Communist countries are clearly the weak links in the world capitalist system at the moment, for both them and the Western economies the greatest barrier to the self-expansion of capital is indeed capital itself.

C. Is revolution enough to bring forth a new society?

The depth of revolt upwelling from within China today can point toward a very different future. This revolt includes the discontent of the **peasantry**; major peasant protests, strikes, and "riots" were reported in 20 provinces over the past year. It also includes the unrest among the **urban proletariat**; eight million workers in state-run enterprises took part in slowdowns and work stoppages in 1993, and 800 new labor unions have spontaneously sprung up in the privatized firms of Guangdong alone. Incredibly, over 10,000 workers came into the streets in an unauthorized open protest against labor conditions in Shanghai this spring. A crucial factor in this ferment is **women** who are speaking out against the way the "free market" has led to rising sexual abuse and commodification of women's bodies. This dissent also extends to **intellectuals and youth** who are questioning the way the oppressive collectivism of the Mao period, when everyone was told to "sacrifice" for the state, has now turned into the excessive individualism of the Deng period, when everyone is told to "sacrifice" for the self-indulgence of the nouveau riche.

The rulers are terrified of such opposition, which explains the force of the oppression, now sure to be even more severe thanks to Clinton's decision to uncouple consideration of China's human rights record from renewal of its MFN

enology of Mind.¹¹

This "spontaneous work of genius" contained in embryo the **whole** of what Hegel was to work out over the next three decades and proved of critical importance in the birth of Marx's "new continent of thought and of revolution." A look back at Marx's encounter with Hegel's **Phenomenology** in his **Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844** on this, its 150th anniversary, can reveal much about what it means to restate Marx's Marxism.

In the final essay of his 1844 **Manuscripts**, "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," Marx praises Hegel's **Phenomenology** for the way its presentation of the myriad stages of development of human consciousness discloses the actual nature of alienation in modern society. In critiquing Hegel for treating history as the unfoldment of so many stages of consciousness instead of the activity of live human beings, Marx reconstructs Hegel's theory of alienation by tying it to alienated relations of labor/capital and of man/woman.

Yet alienation is not the only insight which Marx drew from Hegel. Marx most of all praises Hegel's **Phenomenology** for revealing, in abstract form, the actual process by which humanity **transcends** alienation. Marx does so by appropriating Hegel's notion that the pathway to freedom proceeds through "the negation of the negation"—that is, not alone the destruction of the old, but also the creation of the new. Marx concretely breaks this down by insisting that the communist abolition of capitalist private property is only a first negation which fails to liberate the worker; to reach true liberation, he insists, this negation must itself be negated.

By critically reconstructing Hegel's concept of the **transcendence** of alienation through double negation, Marx projects the need for a new **philosophy** to comprehend the strivings of the **whole** person for liberation, freed from the division of mental versus manual and theory versus practice. He concludes, "We see here how thoroughgoing Naturalism, or Humanism, distinguishes itself from both Idealism and Materialism, and is, at the same time, the truth uniting both...only Humanism can grasp the act of world history."

Marx's leap to the future in 1844 entailed far more than simply the recognition of the proletariat as revolutionary. It was a call for the total uprooting of capitalism, its production and its culture, as embodied in relations of labor/capital and man/woman, which Marx called the most fundamental of all in society. It was a call for a total revolution to uproot all conditions "in which the human essence materializes itself in an inhuman manner in opposition to itself."

It took four decades for Marx to flesh out that challenge to existing society. This ranged from his activity in the 1848 revolutions with the **Communist Manifesto** in hand; to the 30-year process of writing and rewriting **Capital**; to the work of his last decade (1875-83) in which he probed anew into the revolutionary capacity of the peasantry and indigenous

trading status. This is also reflected in the government's ongoing drive to integrate the functions of the party, government, and secret police. The army's growth is reflected in its call for a more belligerent approach toward China's neighbors. Clearly the army is positioning itself to once again play a crucial role in the post-Deng era.

Despite this situation, several specific features of the opposition in China can lead to new developments in the 1990s and beyond.

First, nowhere else has the co-existence of state-capitalism calling itself "Communism" and "free market capitalism" been so glaring. The masses' growing disdain for the latter after having thoroughly rejected the former opens the door to breaking us free from the greatest myth of the twentieth century—the notion that totalitarian communism and "democratic" capitalism are "absolute opposites" and humanity's only alternatives.

Second, unlike in Russia and Eastern Europe, a significant current of the opposition within China has not rejected Marx's Marxism. The humanist vision of Marx's **Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844** continues to attract many youth. And the availability of Marx's **Ethnological Notebooks of 1880-81** in Chinese—though kept out of the reach of the masses by the Communist rulers—reflects a continued interest to rethink what Marx's Marxism means for today. Indeed, a passion for a **philosophy** of revolution is very much embedded within China's development, as seen in the continued interest in a **humanist** Marxism.

This indigenous search for a philosophy of liberation may be the most crucial determinant of all. Our generation has seen living proof that a new society cannot be created by practice alone. This was starkly revealed by the way the emergence of so new and creative a form of workers' self-organization as the **Solidarity** movement in Poland in the 1980s ended up leading not to a revolutionary new beginning, but rather to the rebirth of "free market capitalism." It showed that even the most creative, massive, spontaneous form of organization does not lead to a revolutionary new beginning when separated from a new stage of cognition.

In this sense, the presence, development, and unfoldment of the philosophic dimension which inheres within China's development can help point the way to actualizing what remains an untrodden path—the **dialectics of organization and philosophy**. Though the current which is reaching for a new revolutionary beginning in China may yet be only a ripple in the stream, it can prove of critical importance not alone for China, but for the world—which is why we must turn to the responsibilities facing us as Marxist-Humanists right here in the U.S.

peoples. We can especially see Marx's projection of how total, continuous, global must the concept of revolution be now, in his **Critique of the Gotha Program** of 1875 where he sharply critiqued his own followers for separating organization from the philosophic principles underlying revolution. It represented his full organizational concretization of the principle contained in his demystification of Hegel's concept of "the negation of the negation" in his 1844 **Manuscripts**.

The tragedy is that post-Marx Marxism did not fully catch this humanist vision. To this day, even those Marxists who consider the 1844 **Manuscripts** of epochal importance emphasize but one of its dimensions, the emergence of Marx's critique of bourgeois economics. The way in which Marx projected a new **philosophy** rooted in his critical reconstruction of Hegel's concept of absolute negativity continues to be skipped over.

Indeed, that dimension was skipped over even by such important Marxists as Lenin, who did return to Marx's roots in Hegel in his own 1914 **Philosophic Notebooks** but stopped at the threshold of the Absolute, and Rosa Luxemburg, who raised the critical question of the need for revolutionary democracy after the seizure of power without, how-

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11. See Dunayevskaya's "Why Hegel's **Phenomenology**? Why Now?" in **News & Letters**, May 8, 1987, and "Why **Phenomenology**? Why Now? What is the Relationship either to Organization, or to Philosophy, not Party? 1984-87" in **Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection**, Vol. 13, microfilm #10883-99.

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ever, turning to philosophy.

That Marx's Marxism is not just a "theory of class struggle," let alone a "move from philosophy to the critique of political economy," but rather the development of a philosophy of revolution in permanence, was not recognized until our age.

What proved to be the determinant for recognizing this was the journey Raya Dunayevskaya took in her "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" of May 1953. They probed into the culmination of Hegel's philosophy as presented in "Absolute Knowledge" in his *Phenomenology of Mind*, "Absolute Idea" in his *Science of Logic*, and "Absolute Mind" in his *Philosophy of Mind*.¹² She took this journey neither for academic purposes nor for debunking Hegel's Absolute as just a synonym for an empty abstraction or "God." Rather, what motivated the journey was the effort to come to grips with the central reality of this century—the emergence of counter-revolution from within revolution. The narrowing of socialism to one or another form of "nationalized property" had robbed the movement of the sweep, depth, and revolutionary power of Marx's original insight into the shortcomings of existing society. To recapture that humanist thread of Marx's thought it became imperative to directly confront the dialectic of absolute negativity.

Dunayevskaya's plunge into this dialectic in her 1953 Letters provided an altogether new insight into the nature of the emerging freedom struggles of that period. For it pointed to a new movement from practice reaching to go beyond first negation by asking "what happens after" before the revolution. At the same time, her 1953 Letters projected the need for a new movement from theory to meet this mass quest, "for a totally new revolt, in which everyone experiences 'absolute liberation.'" This led to the birth of the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism.

It took the next three decades for that philosophy to be worked out as a full body of ideas, embodied in Dunayevskaya's "trilogy of revolution": *Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until Today* (1958), *Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982). The heart of this development is Marxist-Humanism's unique contribution: absolute negativity as new beginning.

Throughout our historic period, "absolute negativity as new beginning" has provided the philosophic basis for restating Marx's Marxism. Yet in light of the profound impasse which has confronted both the movements from practice and from theory over the last decade, it has become clearer and clearer that this concept can no longer remain in a separate compartment from organization. Indeed, in response to a retrogressive "changed world" which emerged in the 1980s, Dunayevskaya returned with new eyes to her 1953 Letters, seeing them now as the "ground and roof" for working out what remains to be fully concretized—the inseparability of the dialectic of second negativity from organization

itself. Working this out is the philosophic point upon which our future depends.

B. Why Hegel's 'Phenomenology'? Why Now?

One of the most daunting barriers blocking the restatement of the idea of revolutionary socialism for our day is the legacy of the elitist "vanguard party to lead." Though Lenin is most closely associated with that concept, its originator was Ferdinand Lassalle, whom Marx called a "worker's dictator." Lassalle's notion that a vanguard party is needed to provide the political leadership over the mass struggles, deemed incapable of reaching socialist consciousness through their own endeavors, permeated all sections of the radical movement.

What makes the concept of the "vanguard party" especially pernicious is the separation it introduced between organization and the philosophic principles underlying revolution. The role of "the party" became more and more defined, not by how it embodies and projects the ultimate goal of a new society, but rather by how it obtains political hegemony over the masses by "organizing" the struggle for immediate demands. With all the talk of "leadership, leadership, leadership," the relation between dialectics and organization fell off the map.

So ingrained was this that even after Lenin creatively returned to the Hegelian dialectic in his *Philosophic Notebooks* of 1914, he still kept dialectics in a separate compartment from organization, holding to the end to the elitist concept of the "party to lead."

That the concept of the elitist party has by now come under wide disrepute does not signal the resolution of the problem it introduced, namely separating organization from philosophy. This can be seen in those revolutionists who correctly rejected the concept of the "vanguard party" by emphasizing the importance of spontaneous forms of organization. Yet in ceding everything to these spontaneous forms, anti-vanguardists acted as if the projection of a vision of a new society could be left to spontaneous action alone.

But isn't the role of theory and theoreticians just as objective as the new forms of organization which emerge from mass struggles? If the role of a group of revolutionary theoreticians is left abstract or suspended, does not the question of philosophy once again get removed from the province of organization? So ingrained has this separation between philosophy and organization proven to be in the entire movement that by now revolutionaries worldwide have found themselves unable to seriously answer the rulers' claim that "actually existing capitalism" defines humanity's future.

To combat this, we embarked this year on an effort to break down the separation of dialectics and organization by finally taking seriously Dunayevskaya's insistence in 1986-87 that we re-examine Hegel's most creative work, his *Phenomenology of Mind*. At a moment when Marxism is being declared "dead" and the notion of "Absolutes" disparaged in favor of a rootless relativism, we initiated a new kind of dialogue on the dialectic by inviting all we could reach to a class series on Hegel's *Phenomenology*.¹³

This was not for any scholastic purposes, but in order to grasp the dialectic of negativity as an organizational effort. For far too long, radicals have rested on the results of philosophy rather than grasping its process. In recognizing that this was no longer adequate given the need to restate Marx's Marxism for a radically changed world, we set ourselves the task of grasping the dialectic in philosophy itself. Only in that way would we have a contribution to make to projecting and concretizing the idea of freedom for our age on the basis of absolute negativity as new beginning.

Our class series on Hegel's *Phenomenology* represented the beginning of this labor. It opened new doors for us in revealing that: 1) the dialectics of organization cannot be worked out without a collective journey into the dialectic in philosophy itself; and 2) this journey cannot be truly achieved if we become loose or imprecise about our organizational responsibilities.

To fail to jam together the two—the dialectics of philosophy and actual organizational self-development—would simply have us repeat all the errors of post-Marx Marxists who failed to specify the objective role that a group of workers and intellectuals who are revolutionary theoreticians can play in helping to transform reality. In light of the crisis we face today in the articulation of a liberating alternative to capitalism, we cannot afford to be abstract or indifferent about the development of our own organization.

It is by jamming together the seeming opposites of dialectics of philosophy and organization that we can concretize the principle contained in the "philosophic moment" of Marxist-Humanism, the 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" which projected the dialectics of philosophy and organization as a single dialectic.

In a document entitled "Why Hegel's *Phenomenology*? Why Now? What is the relationship either to Organization, or to Philosophy, not Party?" written in April 1987, Dunayevskaya spoke of the critical importance of keeping philosophy and organization as one in any effort to work out a philosophic new beginning. She here refers to the "parallel" between two very different periods—the mid-1950s, when the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism was born in response to such events as the Hungarian Revolution, and the 1980s, when a new stage of retrogression emerged.

She poses the question of "how to begin anew when two totalities—reality and thought, philosophy and revolution—are in such drastic collision as to [impel the] search, not for a non-existent haven, but a totally new beginning. This new beginning is not really just a new beginning. When

two such wholes collide, a totally new philosophy emerges that would unite the 'contingency,' the past, history, with notional comprehension. For that you need new forces of revolution, new passions, a new vision of totally new human relations, be it of man/woman, master/slaves, the end of alienated labor, and the end of the fetishism of commodities. The long trek of history, striving to achieve this in different historic periods, fought under the name of freedom but always crippled by the narrowing of specific freedoms have not, however, sunk into oblivion but reappear in this recollection of forms now inwardized as the ground for the new."

Dunayevskaya is here referring to the final paragraph of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, where Hegel suddenly twice mentions organization—he poses organization the first time as a spontaneous expression of history, the second time as the intellectual expression of the meaning of history.

She then concludes: "The question that remains unanswered is why should suddenly the word Organization appear as the key, whether we talk about it as spontaneous free existence or all fully worked out as an intellectual expression which yet becomes a new beginning that is first to be worked out during actuality as history is first being 'made'? That is the arduous task that seems to have no answer and yet is put forward as something that must be answered by the coming generation who has absorbed all that objectivity of the past and the present."

C. Philosophic- Organizational tasks, 1994-95

The need to deepen our journey into the dialectic in philosophy inseparable from the further development of our organization as a whole defines our tasks for 1994-95. For we must ask whether it is possible for the self-determination of the Idea to develop philosophically without an organization which captures and embodies the aspirations, questions, and layers of the masses who are searching for a revolutionary new beginning. In this sense, our need for a more concrete focus on our organizational growth in 1994-95 is central to our follow-through on the classes on the *Phenomenology*.

1) Our work in the Black dimension has taken on new importance in light of both the new relations we have forged with ongoing labor and civil rights battles in the South and in our continuing effort to elicit the new social consciousness which emerged from the L.A. rebellion. *American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard* (1963; expanded 1963, 1970, 1983) remains our fundamental statement on the relation of Marxist-Humanism to the Black dimension in the U.S. Yet because of the need to speak to the changed realities of the past decade, we plan to issue a new pamphlet consisting of a restatement of the Marxist-Humanist view of the Black dimension this year.

2) The need to further concretize the relation between dialectics of philosophy and organization demands a new exploration of the historic development of Marxist-Humanism. We plan to do so through a concentration on five publications over the next year: *25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.* (1980); *The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.* (1984); *The Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World since World War II* (1986); the *Constitution of News and Letters Committees* (1956; revised 1973, 1983); and *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989).

3) One of our prime perspectives continues to be to ensure that Marxist-Humanism's major philosophic works remain in print. However, an array of other philosophic writings by Raya Dunayevskaya are either out of print or unpublished. A central task for the next year consists of systematically publishing some of this material.

4) The past year has disclosed the importance of further developing our international relations. We have developed a unique position in support of self-determination in Bosnia and our work in this area will continue over the next year. At the same time, important new inreach has come to us from Chinese and Japanese revolutionists as well as from Russia. A central perspective is to pursue these openings, while strengthening our in-person dialogue with revolutionaries in Mexico—which is currently in upheaval as a result of the rebellion in Chiapas.

5) We cannot work out any of our activities without meeting our financial responsibilities for the continuance of News and Letters Committees. We propose a sustaining fund of \$40,000 to ensure our continued publication and activity.

Whether it concerns any particular task or our perspectives as a whole, our effort to become a "catalyst and propellant" to working out revolutionary new beginnings calls for a heightened sense of the relationship of individual to universal. If there is one thing we learned from the classes on Hegel's *Phenomenology*, it is the many pitfalls that await the individual when the narrow ego—instead of the mass movement and the self-determination of the Idea—becomes the judge of forward movement.

It is therefore crucial to see that "Self-discipline is not the absence of discipline; it is the absence of an order to be disciplined. Self-discipline is born out of the Idea of Freedom as Absolute and History as not only past, but history-in-the-making which Marx saw as the actualization of freedom, its struggles throughout human development. The long, hard road to revolution cannot be achieved if history is skipped over; history-in-the-making, as well as in the past, is inseparable from the self in the self-determination of the Idea of Freedom."¹⁴

—The Resident Editorial Board

June 28, 1994

12. Dunayevskaya's 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" can be found in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1989).

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13. To order a copy of the presentations given in these classes in Chicago, see ad on this page.

14. See *Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1986-87* by Raya Dunayevskaya, Supplement to the *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, Vol. 13, microfilm #11035.

LIFE IN THE 'NEW' SOUTH AFRICA

My life in this "new South Africa" is still the same. A better change hasn't yet been attained due to the fact that many things still have to be restructured. The ANC was able to come to power largely due to the impact of organizations like the National Union of Mineworkers, whose leader, Ramaphosa, was one of the main negotiators in drawing up the new Constitution. But many questions remain as to where to next.

Women trade union organizer
South Africa

WOMEN
IN
INDIA...

The caste system here in Maharashtra is rigidly in place and sex segregation is so intense—it's almost absolute! I feel very much as though I will explode unless I get away from here. Social relations are as they probably have been for centuries, and untouchability is still practiced (ironically, one home I was in which exploits Dalits has a picture of Gandhi in the front room, which demonstrates how much Gandhi really challenged social relations). The system of personal dependency is stubbornly practiced, but is being challenged by imported ideas of individualism. Something has to break up the stagnating relations and thought in rural and urban India! One can almost understand what Marx meant when he spoke in 1853 about British industry breaking up the old order of things. However, the old order of things has to be broken up from inside—obviously, there was nothing "progressive" about British imperialism, nor is there anything "progressive" about today's "new open markets."

Feminist
Maharashtra, India

...AND IN THE U.S.

I feel women have so many things they can do with their lives, and I feel bothered when women feel trapped by the company. They feel trapped by fear. These women aren't even using their heads anymore. And they're only 30 or 40 years old. I have to blame a lot on their education, because in school they only taught us about George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, not about organizing our communities and unions. Every parent needs to quit waiting on the school system to educate their children. If people are only for themselves now, it's because parents aren't educating their children about the struggles that came before.

Black woman sewing machine operator
Somerville, Tenn.

CONTEMPORARY CHINA

An encouraging shift in China is more intellectuals becoming aware that China cannot abandon socialism. I received a letter written by a group of dissidents, saying that "Leftists" (in China it's the way the hardliners are called) are "trying to exploit the outrage of workers and peasants against the social injustice in their struggle for power after Deng. We should not let socialism fall into the hands of the leftists and become their monopoly." Another statement in the letter says, "anticommunist appearances among Chinese intellectuals abroad would not be accepted by people here."

Dissident from China

The republication of one of Raya Dunayevskaya's writings on Mao in the June issue helped illuminate a striking reality about today's China—the way the same regime which once proclaimed the need for self-sacrifice for the state now proclaims the virtues of individual acquisitiveness and profiteering. I especially have in mind Dunayevskaya's point that Mao's thought corresponded to the section on "the discipline of culture" in Hegel's *Phenomenology*. In this section Hegel shows that the Universal is first approached by "relating oneself to state power." He then shows that when the limitations of this become recognized without reaching a total reorganization, the "individual ego" now gets posed as the Universal. Just as there is no class divide between "private" capitalism and state-capitalism that called itself "Com-

Readers' Views

SPIRIT OF REVOLT IN BLACK, LATINO AND LABOR REALITY

I agree with the statement by Teresa Allison which Gene Ford quoted in his article in the June issue of N&L: "We have to think, take to the streets and march because the mind is what they are afraid of." Everyone feels so isolated and cut off from each other nowadays. But when workers begin to see that there are a lot of others who think the same way about how we are being made to live today, you have the beginning of a movement. That is why the thoughts workers have against this system are never brought out by the powers that be.

Latino meatpacker
Chicago

These are times of stress, and the rulers and manipulators are trying to concentrate the hatred of the people against the so-called "illegal aliens." It's a recipe for a very dangerous confrontation. The right is blaming illegal aliens in an effort to salvage the status quo. The Left has to make clear where the enemy lies.

Chicano activist
Los Angeles

Black people were brought to this country to work for the white masters, but now the rulers have decided they don't need our labor anymore. So they are now trying to get rid of us any way they can. That to me explains why the drugs, the guns, the violence have become so much a part of our reality.

Black worker
Chicago

Jim Mills' lead article in the May N&L provides an excellent analysis on crime in America. America refuses to admit its part in creating a society that wallows in crime and injustice, and consequently is unable to take intelligent and humane actions to change it. All it can come up with is incarceration and execution—if need declines for those it considers undesirable or maybe less human. I was also reminded of the times I was in the Philippines. There is nothing that I feared more than being arrested. Back then, arrest was tantamount to death. It still is. Here, too. Three weeks ago in Staten Island, a Black youth died while

munism," so there is no philosophic divide between the deification of the state and the deification of the isolated individual.

Student of philosophy
New York

It was compelling to read Raya's analysis of Mao in terms of Hegel's study of human consciousness, and how Hegel recognized Mao as "Spirit in Self-estrangement." The question she raised concerning Mao's pull on young revolutionaries is important to answer over 25 years later, because that development of consciousness is crucial for a successful revolution that "does not repeat the past."

Reader
Detroit

The extreme in capitalism which is coming to life today is prison labor, as in China. I don't mean the use of outright prison labor, but the fact that the whole country is a prison labor farm, run for the benefit of the state-capitalist elite.

Observer
Oakland, California

LESSONS OF BOSNIA

As early as the beginning of the war in Bosnia, Marxist-Humanists pointed out that we cannot depend on the capitalist state powers to defend what the Bosnian struggle for self-determination was for. Unfortunately, others in the Bosnian support movement took a different approach, such as supporting direct U.S. intervention there as the "solution." They now have to face the fact that this has only brought Bosnia closer to partition. To me it shows how deadly is the movement's acceptance of the idea that we must accept the limits of the given.

Sheila Fuller
Illinois

in police custody. When I see children and youth, I wonder about their future.

Filipina activist
New York

Fayette County [Tennessee] sometimes seems like the other side of the world to me. It's like they still want slavery here. But I'm not going to be anybody's slave. Never. The only time I was like a slave was when my seven kids were little and I would do anything for them. But that was out of love; it was different. I won't even be a slave to my husband.

Black working woman
Somerville, Tenn.

I've listened to TV, radio and friends blaming immigrants for workers being out of jobs, for the health care crisis, welfare crisis and all the other economic problems of this country. A big percentage of immigrants as well as North Americans need to understand that we are here, first of all, because powerful American companies took over our countries, not as immigrants but as owners. They took over everything from oil to bananas, devastating the country, leaving people with no ways to survive. When people don't have the opportunity to learn, they internalize the lies that they hear. One sees more and more immigrants, especially Latinos, walking down the streets of this big country with their heads down, hoping not to be noticed. They feel scared and guilty, as if they were causing the crises here.

Ecuadorian woman
New York

The article by Gene Ford on "Spirit of revolt beneath today's Black, Latino, labor reality" (see June N&L) was the best article I ever read in New & Letters. The most intense part was when he pointed out that no one makes a category of the most important force of all—the mind of the oppressed. For a revolutionary organization to connect with the masses, it has to be in touch with what is brewing within those minds.

Ed
Chicago

When you look at the outright fascism that has arisen in a former "Communist" country like Yugoslavia, you have to wonder about whether "first negation"—what Marx referred to as the abolition of private property—is any kind of "progressive" step at all.

Activist
Flint, Michigan

REVOLT
IN
CHIAPAS

It is important to see that Peter Wermuth, in his article "Dialogue with a Zapatista Revolutionary" (N&L, June 1994), is following up on the events in Mexico and its repercussions in this country. However, it struck us that he dedicated a large part of his article to the "contradictions" facing Mexico based on the declaration of a so-called legal representative of the Zapatistas invited to the U.S. by the reactionary Worker's World Party. No doubt the spirit of Mao was present in the Chicago event. Was this really a dialogue with a Zapatista revolutionary?

Marina Storni, Sin Mas and
Carlos Varela
New York

The article about the Zapatistas in the June issue really hit home for me, especially when Pedro Castillo said the Zapatistas oppose the vanguard party. What has always bothered me is that I don't need some "leader" telling me what I have to do and think. I get enough of that from my boss at work. What I need is an idea of what we are going to do after we get rid of this system. Working that out takes a lot of time

and effort from people who come together in the struggle.

Martin Almora
Chicago

WHY PHILOSOPHY? WHY NOW?

Years ago I read *Marxism and Freedom* and it helped me to develop a modicum of hope for the future during a time when I had severe doubts. Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's *Philosophy of Revolution* was so complex that I tried again and again, but couldn't get through many of the terms. I try to wade through some of the theoretical presentations in N&L but terms like "negation of the negation" are rarely if ever defined. Still, here is my renewal and a donation. I pass my own copy on after it is read and that friend passes it on once more.

Longtime reader
Oregon

The Marxist-Humanist classes on Hegel's *Phenomenology* helped me a lot. What I am seeing now is how in the past people have looked for change with only a halfway understanding. The focus was all on the external class struggle and not on the internal changes that were also needed amongst the people. In the past, the Communists have often played on the desperation of the people, and the revolution then became just a change of masters.

Mexican revolutionary
California

I have just read Erich Fromm's preface to Raya Dunayevskaya's *Philosophy and Revolution*. It is a clarion call to those of us who know that the spirit of the Gospels and the ideas of Marx's humanism flow in the same stream of human historical realities. The reality of counter-revolution throughout these 2,500 years was clearly anticipated by both Jesus (vulgar anti-christ Churchianity) and Marx (vulgar communism) as was the passing away of all institutions. Every call that challenges our humanness is simultaneously a call to leave alienated forms of organization and to embrace the Revolution In Perpetuity and heal our own alienated relationships.

El Monte Dan
California

After reading *Marxism and Freedom*, what Raya Dunayevskaya calls "post-Marx Marxism" is becoming clearer to me, as are the lines of demarcation you have with other groups.

Correspondent
North Carolina

The idea I get from your organization is that it's like the blade of a knife, a force of negativity that cuts through revolutionary struggles just when the revolutionary ideas are going to be subsumed. I want to know more about the idea of "negation of the negation" from Hegel that seems to be very important to you. I went to Ghana with the Peace Corps several years ago and came back disillusioned with both the Peace Corps and Nkrumahism. I decided to go back to study philosophy. This may have been a retreat, but I keep feeling philosophy must be able to help us understand revolution in a new way.

Philosophy grad student
Memphis, Tenn.

I want to let you know how rewarding the classes on Hegel, Marx and history were for me, and to thank you for providing the first genuine education I've had in years. I also want to thank you for your continuing commitment to change. Enclosed is a contribution to your Appeal which I hope will make my appreciation a bit more tangible.

Counselor
Illinois

THANK YOU AND A REMINDER!

Our thanks to all our readers and friends who have contributed so generously to our Appeal for help in keeping N&L going. Have you sent in your contribution yet?

Black/Red View

by John Alan

The heated debate created by the invitation Benjamin Chavis gave to Louis Farrakhan to participate in the NAACP-sponsored summit conference of African-American leadership in Baltimore last month has unfortunately hidden the reactionary nature of that conference. While it's true that Chavis, as the director of the NAACP, violated the principles of the NAACP by inviting a leader of an anti-Semitic organization to the conference, his critics are quick to point out that Chavis has gone further than that in an organizational sense. He has refurbished and reasserted the conservative principle of Dr. W. E. B. DuBois' "Talented Tenth" to lead the African-American masses by ignoring African Americans living in poverty in the inner cities, the alleged subjects of the conference, and by casting a veil of secrecy over the deliberations of the 50 African-American leaders he had selected to work out a strategy to deal with economic and social crises now destroying the African-American community.

Many of Chavis' "leaders" are hardly household names and have only a marginal connection with the Black mass movement. Farrakhan's organization refused to participate in the Civil Rights Movement. And then there were "free floating" intellectuals like Cornel West who believe that the urban Black poor are a "nihilistic threat" to American civilization.

Of course, these unknown "leaders" and the "independent intellectuals" were not the main personalities at the conference; that honor went to the men with organizations, like Chavis, Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton and Farrakhan. These men have their own political agenda to gain power by organizing and disciplining African-American masses. Jackson said quite candidly, during an interview on the MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour that "organization is needed to control violence."

The secrecy surrounding the Baltimore Conference

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

Some 30 years ago civil rights workers, Black and white, entered that "undisclosed realm of darkness" called Mississippi. The evil of white supremacy that lurked there was manifest in countless ways. The wanton murder of three civil rights workers, Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney, was perhaps the most infamous manifestation of the evil that stalked Freedom Summer (an "undisclosed realm of darkness" still surrounds that crime).

More important though is the economic-political "manifold actuality" of the "New South" that systematically conspires to undermine the progress of newly emerging social struggles. Over the last decade we have witnessed the powerful beginnings of a resurgent labor movement across the South, one whose cutting edge is increasingly being sharpened in Mississippi. Mississippi too is where a state-wide Black student movement has mobilized against the legal machinations of the state's racist Governor Fordice to close down or merge historically Black colleges, following a Jim Crow history of denying them equitable funding.

Unfortunately, in the Freedom Summer conference workshops and plenaries, one never heard the voices and reason of this new insurgent labor movement whose content is predominantly Black women. And though the conference was held at Tougaloo College and Jackson State University, there was no opportunity to hear the voices and perspectives of the Mississippi Black student movement, except when Bob Moses, organizer of the Summer Project in '64, spontaneously elicited the views of students in a workshop that, until Moses's intervention, was taken up with singing freedom songs. A workshop I co-organized around the News & Letters publication *American Civilization on Trial*, an original Freedom School text, had scheduled Black women workers from the Delta; we also invited two student leaders to speak.

It was indeed odd then that in a state where a militant labor movement has emerged out of the last two decades of economic restructuring; where a state-wide Black student movement now challenges the state; where the old lynchocracy continues in the form of jailhouse hangings and the theft of Black-owned land; where the governor wants to close a Black college in order to turn it into a prison, that not a whiff of any of this was evident in the official proceedings of Mississippi "Homecoming" conference. No wonder Charles Tisdale, editor of the *Jackson Advocate*, felt that "the celebration is premature."

The conference still had its surprises. Beatrice Branch, the first woman to head the state's NAACP, departed from the moderation of other plenary speakers to tell us that in Mississippi today some 80% of all Black folk live below the poverty line; that 30 years after Freedom Summer, the average income of Black men in the state of Mississippi is only 45% that of white men; and that despite the number of Black elected officials in Jackson, a white ruling elite who live outside Jackson still run the city with the connivance of some Black politicians. The truth is that "the changes in Mississippi since the CRM are more 'cosmetic' than real."

In this context, it is therefore totally incomprehensible why the organizers saw fit to invite Jackson's Mayor Kane Ditto and Governor Fordice to address the conference. Kane Ditto obliged by opening the Saturday plenary.

Black 'leaders' reel backward

emphasized the historic estrangement of Black leadership from the Black masses. But to think that estrangement can be overcome without transcending the very concept of organization as it is known and practiced today would be foolish. Indeed, the internal dialectic of this estrangement and the objective alienating relationship that the African-American masses have to U.S. capitalism is the ground for working out a philosophy of liberation which could end this fatal dualism in Black thought.

The conclave of Black leaders meeting in Baltimore believes that the economic and social dislocation in the inner cities can be resolved by capitalism, even though the Black economic/social crisis is clearly a manifestation of the deep, unending crisis of capitalism itself. But still, we find that Chavis and many of the other leaders have a plan to bring capitalism to the Black community. Their plan is hardly different in theme from the nineteenth century economic moralism of Booker T. Washington even though banks and industrialists have had absolutely no interest in expanding their capital investment in South Central Los Angeles.

According to the June 12, 1994 issue of the *New York Times Magazine*, Chavis' plan to bring capital to the Black community is "his philosophy of self-determination," supported by an agreement the NAACP has with more than 60 companies to hire and promote more Blacks, as well as to buy supplies from Black-owned vendors, and with two banks to finance NAACP-staffed, neighborhood-based lending offices, as well as an entrepreneurial training program for high school and college students.

This is essentially the content and method of Chavis' "philosophy." It is the most crass perversion of the idea of self-determination that one can find. It removes self, the human subject, from self-determination and replaces it with an external force of capitalist development to come from outside the African-American community as

the real self-determining force of development. In the 1960s, African leaders also thought that was the way Africa would develop.

When one chooses to turn one's back on the realities of capitalism, one has to embrace the ideological logic that the economic-social crisis of capitalism is caused by the "social pathology" of the Black masses, i.e., their long stay on relief rolls, crime and unwed mothers. President Clinton has made this political sermon the center of his campaign to reform welfare. And, at the same time, this sermon has been taken over by most of the African-American leadership from Jackson to Farrakhan.

Thus we find that the real opposite, both in criticism and in activity of the American society, comes from the consciousness of the African-American masses. It is not an academic opposition, because in character it is essentially the will to transcend the existing race relationship in this country by canceling the alienating conditions of life, whether it be in the form of the Los Angeles rebellion or Black women workers self-organizing in the Mississippi Delta region.

The self-consciousness of Black masses is the opposite of the "nihilism" of Cornel West or other "theories of social pathology" currently in vogue. These "theories" are ideological attempts to hide the fact that the self-consciousness of Black masses in motion reflects the totality of the U.S. capitalist crisis, and thus is a consciousness rooted in Black life, limited by permanent unemployment, poor education, covert and overt racism and the humiliation of living in housing projects that are controlled by the police. But the negativity of Black life is the fuel of Black mass resistance. The dialectic of this resistance has not been fully comprehended or articulated by intellectuals, not at least since Richard Wright attempted to do so in his 1930s novels, because so many of them have simply grasped Black resistance in the realm of cultural survival and not as an act of objective transcendence of the American racist society.

N.Y. jobless speak

New York—Two Black men who are unemployed discussed the state of the City with News & Letters while waiting in a welfare office line:

Carpenter: "There are so many homeless, and so many empty buildings; why not fix them up for the homeless? On this welfare line there are carpenters, plumbers, electricians—we could do the job. But there are no jobs for us, while the mayor announces plans to create 'low income' housing for people making \$30,000 a year. That's not low income! Graft and corruption prevent the City from taking the abandoned buildings and making housing available to the needy."

"I'd gladly take a job if I could get one. I could earn more in a week than I get on welfare in a month. I can't get in the union; it's very difficult unless you know somebody. The only job I've been offered, you have to have your own tools. I'm going to ask welfare for money for the tools, but they'll give me a hard time. They never tell you what your options are, even if you know enough to ask."

Heavy equipment operator: "I want a job too. I just wasted four and half years in the military. I thought I would be able to use the skills I learned, but I got nothing out of it. I drove a tank and all kinds of equipment in the service, but when I applied for a job as a crane operator recently, they said I had no experience as a heavy equipment operator! There just aren't any jobs."

Tiananmen 5 years after

Oakland, Cal.—On the fifth anniversary of the Tiananmen Square uprising, I attended a memorial for the participants of that protest, in San Francisco Chinatown's Portsmouth Square. A student speaker, Liu Lei, reminded us that this memorial event comes on the heels of President Clinton's historic decoupling of trade and human rights, and simultaneously with the 50th anniversary of WWII's defeat of Hitler's campaigns. I found that Liu Lei's pointing out these apparently dissonant elements together was perhaps an attempt to uncover a unifying thread. He said that while D-Day is celebrated by the West for its triumph over Hitler's tyranny, do not forget the tyranny the participants at Tiananmen Square tried to overcome.

Perhaps placing a replica of the Goddess of Democracy at Portsmouth Square is symbolically very apt at pointing to that dissonance. The square is in the heart of Chinatown, on a street named after Dennis Kearney, an anti-Chinese demagogue from the days when Leland Stanford embraced heartily the masses of Chinese coolie-laborers who toiled on his railroads. It was an era when the likes of Kearney hated and feared the "Chinese menace" while the likes of Stanford loved the near-slavery conditions of imported Chinese labor. Have things really changed that much? One only needs to listen to the vicious demagoguery against immigrants in the election campaign rhetoric of California Governor Pete Wilson.

Another echo comes from a distant past when, in 1840, the British government sent troops and ships to a dissolute China to enforce the opium trade. In a way, Deng Xiaoping, with his "modernization" program, delivers a similar kind of message from the first opium war: China is, once again, ripe for conquest. How far we've come since the day Mao rolled out the red carpet for Nixon. It is telling that today President Clinton has eulogized the Great Warrior, but not the courageous students who erected and died for the Goddess of Democracy.

—Chinese American

Freedom Summer, '64

ry. While Fordice had the sense not to show his face, no doubt in fear of sparking a student protest, one is at a loss to explain why the organizers would invite Fordice to speak at the very Black institutions he has threatened to terminate!

Mississippi's unresolved contradictions from the period of Freedom Summer have borne new, more serious ones within the political remnants of the CRM. But just as surely has a new social consciousness been born among Black workers, women and student youth. The twin birth of a restructured South and a radical Black social consciousness may appear an exception in our so-called post-industrial, post-Civil Rights society. But what we risk forgetting, at our cost, is what has historically distinguished the South as a region, namely, that the superimposition of ever new social strata on the old does not necessarily mean the overcoming of the latter. Which is what makes 1964's Freedom Summer a summer that never ended.

Justice for janitors!

Los Angeles—About 400 janitors and their supporters gathered on June 15 to protest the work conditions of janitors employed by Los Angeles City and County. The city and county will not agree to require janitorial contractors to guarantee livable wages, health insurance and protection from mistreatment on the job, nor to respect the janitors' right to organize.

Protesters marched from the Justice for Janitors local headquarters eastward into downtown. We stopped in front of the Hilton Hotel, where slogans were chanted and flyers passed out. Hilton janitorial employees are not organized. When we reached the new downtown Metro (subway), police stepped aside as we streamed into the station and rode two stops without buying a ticket.

We marched into and through the Hall of Administration, a public building. Hearings were being held there in which another group of city employees, the police, were demanding raises. The janitors earlier had been denied a hearing. We moved on to City Hall, but were not allowed inside. A rally was held on the steps.

The Brown Berets were present, as were the Korean Drummers, the Pro-Immigrant Coalition and MECHA students from UCLA and Cal State Northridge. African-American supporters were present. But the great majority of the group were the janitors themselves and their families. Most are fairly recent immigrants from Mexico and Central America, most documented, some not.

Maria T. has been working at LAX (International Airport) for seven years and has been a union member most of that time. She makes \$5 an hour, no benefits. Most of her co-workers make \$4.70. "We pay \$770 rent and we have to pay for the children's needs. The city takes advantage of us. They see us as second-class and unable to defend ourselves," she said. Her husband, who works in a factory, marched beside her.

Martha works in an organized building and has been happy with her wages and benefits for most of the 17 years she has worked there. "But they have cut personnel, so we've ended up working extra hours for the same pay," she said. "They've told us we should be able to do the work in the usual eight hours. We held a meeting and demanded one more worker. The contractors finally agreed to add one half-time position."

—Anna Maillon

Youth

Where were the stones in 'Stonewall 25'?

New York—On June 26, 1.1 million people converged on New York City for the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion. The event marked the birth of the modern gay and lesbian civil rights movement. There was an international march on the United Nations to affirm the human rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people. There was also an alternative march organized by international AIDS activists to protest 13 years of the global AIDS epidemic with no signs of a cure or any real progress towards dealing with the millions of HIV-infected people in the world.

There was a large youth contingent in the March, presenting one of the largest and most vocal groups. The youth were the most inspiring to me, as I saw hope for the movement in their power. They held a drumming and dancing circle which some of the gay adults found quite annoying in the resort town of Greenwich Village.

Unfortunately, it seems that capitalism has poisoned us, and divisions of race, class and gender—that seemed unthinkable a few short years ago—have been drawn. The rift between those wanting to transform society and those wanting to assimilate into the mainstream has reached dangerous proportions. This is shocking for one of the most diverse movements in human history.

I personally witnessed drag queens, leather folk, and bare-chested lesbians being taunted and verbally abused by gay men on the streets of Greenwich Village. What is happening? Where is the philosophy of revolution?

Stonewall 25 was not considered to be as important as the Gay Games IV, an Olympic-type competitive sporting event, by the press or the people in the movement. The Stonewall anniversary was second place to almost everything. It was more important to dance on the U.S.S. Intrepid aircraft carrier museum at \$40 a pop for 4,000 men than to have dialogue about the direction of the movement or discuss human liberation for all.

The New York City police force faced their biggest job ever, with 6,500 cops on duty at one time. Surprisingly, there was not one arrest reported of the 1.1 million participants. How that happened, I don't know. But the cops even bowed to the "illegal" 10,000-person strong AIDS activist march down Fifth Avenue. They obviously realized the power of the masses, even if the masses don't realize their own power.

Many white gay men have disposable incomes that allow them to fantasize that they are safe, that they have arrived. They don't want to give up their piece of the pie. They don't understand that they are becoming the enemy within the movement for total human liberation.

I found it frightening that some people thought that AIDS activists are just too darn angry. One of the placards that AIDS activists carried asked, "Where is your rage?" Many people found that distasteful and not very polite.

Anne Wentworth, a speaker from ACT UP/New York, confronted the crowd on being "over AIDS," "tired of it," so to speak, and used to the fact that our friends are dying. I cannot imagine ever getting used to genocide. When this same speaker called for an end to racism and sexism within the movement, only half the people on the Great Lawn of Central Park applauded.

This breaks my heart and infuriates me at the same

time. When we sold our rage for a lie from Clinton, it seems no one went back for a refund.

—Tom Williamson

San Francisco—Twenty-five years ago, after police repeatedly raided and harassed drag queens and others who frequented gay bars in Greenwich Village, the community fought back. The Stonewall Inn, a local gay bar, became the focal point as people took to the streets, fighting cops and throwing bottles and bricks. Since hailed as the "start of the gay liberation movement," most participants from the Stonewall era are hardly fighting for their rights as they were then.

Today's gay liberation movement is comprised of a younger, angrier generation. We've grown up in a world of Reagan, oppression and AIDS. And we're fighting back, saying that we aren't free yet. Rap groups and hotlines do not solve alienation. We want more.

L.A. youth summit

Los Angeles—Some 200 teenagers, mainly African-American and Latino, met at South Central's Jefferson High School in late June to discuss the ominous implications of California's recently enacted "three strikes and you're out" law. Organized by the youth group South Central Youth Empowered thru Action (SC-YEA), the focus was on how to protest and change this law that, in the words of one youth, "is just another way of enslaving our people once again."

Under the law, someone convicted as a juvenile of two "serious" (not necessarily violent) felonies (a conviction achieved under juvenile "justice" without a jury trial), and then convicted as an adult, at any age, of a felony of any kind (including, for example, writing a bad check) would automatically be imprisoned for the rest of his or her life, without possibility of parole.

At a time when Black vs. Latino teenage fights and killings are headlines, the affinity of Black and Latino youth was realized in bringing together youth from both backgrounds to fight for a common cause. Both women and men, African Americans and Latino/as, were equal, articulate participants, and while some adults violated the teens' stress that this was an opportunity for teenage self-expression, it was the youth who proved that they had the most penetrating things to say.

"How is it that Governor Wilson says the State of California has no money for jobs or recreation centers, but there is money to build 20 new prisons?" asked Marlo Jenkins, a SC-YEA organizer. "It costs \$23,000 for one of us to go to the University of Southern California for one year, but it costs the State of California \$32,000 to keep one of us in jail for a year. Forty-five percent of the youth incarcerated by the California Youth Authority are Latinos, and 35 percent are African American. I say give us rehabilitation, recreation, and education. Locking people up is not the answer. Youth need to come together and change things for themselves."

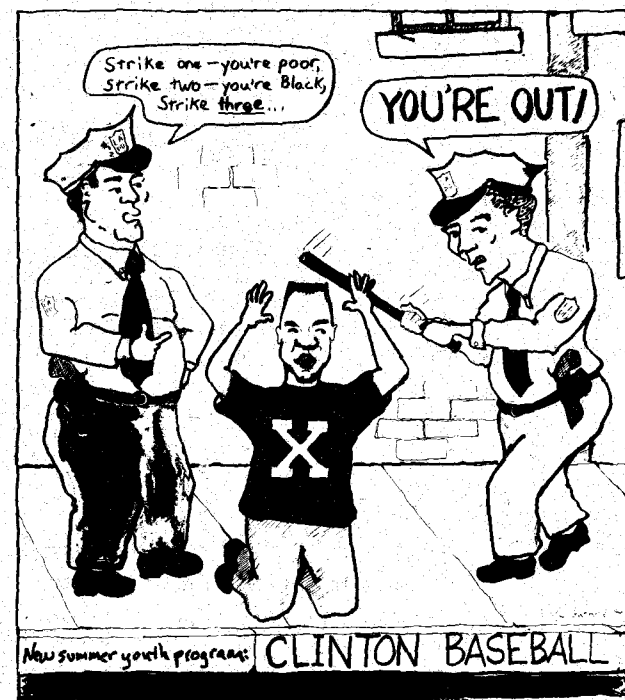
"They can't run away from the problem by putting us in jail," warned Tony Zepeda, student body president at Jefferson High. "I'm tired of coming to school and not

We are denied full access to gay organizations. Adults seem too afraid of getting in trouble, of being accused of being child molesters, to allow us to be a part of their world. So youth issues are just a sidebar, mentioned only because we "have a high rate of suicide."

Dubbed "Generation Q" by the mainstream gay press, gay youth today are more inclusive than our parents, more together than those before us, and are coming out at a younger age. The adult "gay community" has used this to prove that we are now fully accepted by straight society, therefore, we don't need to fight anymore. This is simply not true.

Gay youth are seen as "at risk," uncontrollable, rebellious and therefore dangerous, by the adult gay community. We have joined together and become leaders in direct action organizations across the country. And gay youth today want something more. We want to know that we have a future, that we aren't just fighting to prove to heterosexuals that "hey, we're okay, let us join you." We don't want just a seat at the table. We want a society where people are truly free—where we are recognized as human beings.

—Lynn Hailey



learning anything. I'm tired of being put down because I'm a Latino from the ghetto. I'm tired of seeing Black and Brown faces as the criminals on TV. I've had enough! Do we need all those police out there jeopardizing our lives? Let's work together to break down three strikes and we're out!"

In the discussion teens lined up at the microphones to voice their opinions. Some wanted to know more about the law, and many voiced angry views about how the state is targeting their young lives. A group of Black teens from Pasadena brought their solidarity and support, as well as copies of the first issues of a newsletter they have started, called "Express Yourself News."

—Michelle Landau

American Dilemma revisited

(Continued from page 4)

at all is unaware of the Garvey movement. This is the most remarkable phenomenon in the history of the Negro in the United States. Mr. Myrdal recognizes its importance. He writes:

For one thing it proves that it is possible to reach the Negro masses if they are appealed to in an effective way. It testifies to the basic unrest in the Negro community. It tells of a dissatisfaction so deep that it amounts to hopelessness of ever gaining a full life in America. (page 749)

Mr. Myrdal himself does not analyze the Garvey movement, although he states that this, along with a thorough study of the movement, ought to be done:

Negro intellectuals, for understandable reasons, show certain inhibitions in dealing with the topic, as do the white students of the Negro problem. But it is worthy of intensive historical investigation and careful reflection. (page 749)

Why Mr. Myrdal has not done so in a study lasting four years and covering 1400 pages of text remains inexplicable....

PORTENTS ON THE HORIZON

To anyone who is concerned about the Negro question today, this neglect of the Garvey movement has just about reached its end. There is stirring in the Negro people in the United States today a racial consciousness which has at present found its most extreme expression in the writings of Richard Wright....These are portents on the horizon which can be ignored only to the peril of the labor movement. But they must be approached upon the indispensable basis of the revolutionary struggle for socialism and of the proletariat as that social class which will solve the Negro problem along with all other major problems that capitalist society cannot solve. From the very fact that scholars like Mr. Johnson and Mr. Myrdal make such valuable contributions to the Negro question, it is necessary for Marxists to attack and expose without mercy their false philosophical premises.

German student activists support multiethnic Bosnia

Frankfurt, Germany—At a discussion on Bosnia I held in June with three student activists from the left student journal, *Perspektiven*, some of the barriers they faced from entrenched attitudes on the Left came up. One student, a German of Serbian origin, said: "We wanted to support those people fighting against extreme Serbian or Croatian nationalism and so we began to publish articles dealing with this issue. *Perspektiven* stands in the tradition of the non-dogmatic Left, of the student movement in Frankfurt, and of the Frankfurt School."

"We wanted to think about how to maintain a multiethnic, multicultural society here in Europe in a situation where a society is being destroyed. We started to discuss military intervention in 1992. Part of us thought intervention by UN forces would be necessary. But we have no unique position on this. What we have in common is the perspective of keeping a democratic, multiethnic Bosnia intact, and that of fighting for a democratic Croatia and Serbia. The war will not be solved only in Sarajevo."

A second student added: "There is a more or less consistent position within *Perspektiven* that the weapons embargo should have been lifted." A third student stated: "It should also be noted that we don't fall into undifferentiated support for the Bosnian regime. We have always tried to keep in contact with political forces that are non-nationalist and progressive, for example the left political parties in Tuzla who are proposing non-nationalist solutions."

"We have also had contact with the Belgrade Circle in Serbia, which is an intellectual, progressive association with 400 members meeting there every week and publishing quite important analyses. We also have contact with women's groups. As for *Perspektiven*, we see ourselves in the tradition of Critical Theory, of its analysis of society. We are convinced that Bosnia is a metaphor for emerging conflicts since the end of the Cold War. We need more differentiated theoretical categories."

In terms of organizing last February's conference on Bosnia, the second student recalled: "It was difficult to find academics and other theorists who were willing to participate. This resulted in most of the speeches being from former Yugoslavia." The third student added: "Al-

though we had invited a lot of German or Frankfurt academics, who always claim to be aware of what is happening in society, not one of them agreed to appear."

"It was a disgrace for those who came from the former Yugoslavia, some of whom had had 10 or 20 years of contact with professors at Frankfurt University. It was one of the most amazing consequences of our organizing. We invited the whole Institute for Social Research, and the Department of Philosophy, which means Professor Jurgen Habermas and his friends."

The second student said: "Some said it was difficult to decide who is fighting against whom there. It's a war in Europe and yet they don't know what's going on in Bosnia. It's amazing. The audience was mainly students from Germany and refugees from Bosnia, but almost no professors even came to hear it."

The third student added: "Daniel Cohn-Bendit, who did speak at the February conference, also spoke on Bosnia last Fall at a Green Party convention. They were booing him when he said that the arms embargo was unjustified, and that fascist aggression can never be tolerated in Europe. The situation has changed since last Fall, but only a bit. Especially in Germany, we have a highly ideologized perception of the whole conflict."

"Pacifists have to apply their pacifism to Bosnia, and thus cannot support a defense by force of arms of the people under attack. In addition, radicals with an anti-imperialist orientation who'd never bothered themselves with Eastern Europe and who had been quite comfortable in the Cold War time, would in many cases say that since the conservative German government recognized Croatia and attacked Serbian aggression that we as a Left have to take the opposing position. People never bothered with the real materialistic basis of the conflict."

"People tried to interpret the conflict with completely static, undialectical and ideologized concepts. The main issue for them was to preserve their own way of thinking in an unreflective, undifferentiated way and not to consider the real conditions of the people in the former Yugoslavia."

Perspektiven can be contacted at: Falkstrasse 106 HH, D-60487 Frankfurt, Germany. (See also "Our Life and Times," p. 12).

—Kevin A. Barry

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Frankfurt, Germany—The U.S., Russia and the West European governments are planning at the July 8 economic summit in Naples to put the final touches on a "peace" settlement which will ghettoize the Bosnian population and leave the Serbian aggressors with nearly 50% of the territory. The only problem is that the Bosnian people show few signs of caving in to such a plan. Recently, Bosnian army commander Rasim Delic told the Sarajevo newspaper, *Oslobodjenje*: "Up to now, we have carried out a defensive war. Now, we will go to phase two, a war of liberation." (*Le Monde*, June 26-27, 1994)

As the Serbian genocide and "ethnic cleansing" continues, the UN and the Western powers keep the arms embargo on Bosnia; the European intellectuals and the Left have begun to show some belated signs of taking a stand against the genocide after two years of holding a hands off attitude of blaming "all sides."

In France, a campaign by several prominent intellectuals to create a "Sarajevo slate" in that country's European parliament elections touched off a furious debate in the leading newspapers. Although some of its initiators withdrew from the slate before the actual voting, the

whole debate succeeded in moving French public opinion toward lifting the arms embargo. In addition, a special issue devoted to the Bosnia crisis of *Les Temps Modernes*, the journal founded by Jean-Paul Sartre, sold out its entire stock of several thousand copies in only a few weeks.

There are today 300 grassroots Bosnia support groups in France. Two days before Clinton et. al. had their media extravaganza on June 6 on the beaches of Normandy, the real anti-fascist forces, 10,000 strong, held a demonstration to support Bosnia, a few miles away in Caen. Organized by the National Convention of Committees Against Ethnic Cleansing, many of the demonstrators carried posters listing the names of Bosnian dead.

Others, mainly women's groups, protested the Serbian rape camps. Another held a sign which read: "American soldiers, did you die so that fascism could establish itself once again in Europe?" Here, unlike in the official ceremonies marking D-Day, German anti-fascists not only joined the march, but their anti-racist Association for Threatened Peoples was put at the head of the demonstration.

In Germany, students and intellectuals have also been raising Bosnia as a central issue for the Left. In February, Help for Bosnia, a group organized in part by activists from the left student journal, *Perspektiven*, held a three-day conference at Frankfurt University where intellectuals from the former Yugoslavia, as well as from Germany, spoke out against the genocide. These included Bosnian intellectuals such as Gajo Bozidar Sekulic, a philosophy professor at the University of Sarajevo, who is a former member of the Praxis group. Sekulic said at the time that it was a "great scandal" that so few prominent former left intellectuals had taken a clear stand against the genocide in Bosnia. (*Tageszeitung*, Feb. 17,

1994) The group *Perspektiven* also helps Bosnian exiles in Germany to publish their own journal, *Egzil*. (For an interview with students from *Perspektiven*, see p. 11.)

Arafat's 'homecoming'

Yasir Arafat's visit in July to Gaza and Jericho, where he will soon take up residency, has underlined the fragility of the Palestinian "self-rule" accord which he is now touting as the road to an independent state.

Arafat's hurried tour of such areas as the Jabaliya refugee camp in the Gaza strip, site of the birth of the Pal-



Arafat in Gaza: how long will the 'honeymoon' last?

estinian intifada seven years ago, was met by a massive demonstration in Jerusalem on July 2 of thousands of rightwing Israelis opposed to even the minimal amount of Palestinian "self-rule" allowed by Arafat's deal with Israel. Though the Israeli "rejection front" has recently been in some disarray, the July 2 demonstration showed that the ability of Israeli chauvinists to sabotage the "self-rule" agreement cannot be underestimated.

At the same time, Arafat has much more to worry about than just the Israeli right. He is facing intense opposition not only from the Islamic fundamentalists and Palestinian rejectionists opposed to any accommodation with Israel, but also from independent Palestinians increasingly disturbed at the autocratic nature of PLO rule being imposed in Gaza and Jericho. Though Arafat promises "democratic" elections in these areas, the emergence of a new layer of military officers, secret police, and PLO bureaucrats accountable to no one but Arafat himself is already giving much cause for concern.

In light of the unsettled nature of the present situation, international capital is holding off for now from bankrolling Arafat's experiment in "self-rule." Though \$2.4 billion in aid over the next five years has been promised the PLO, almost no money has arrived thus far. It remains to be seen whether the PLO-Israeli accord will be able to survive such internal and external pressures.

—Peter Wermuth

Nigerians protest military

The political crisis festering ever since the military in Nigeria cancelled last year's elections has come to the surface again. On June 12, Moshood Abiola, who most observers think won last year's elections, declared himself the country's only legal president before 3,000 people and then slipped away before police could arrest him. Twelve days later, by which time the military had charged him with treason, Abiola surrendered and was imprisoned along with other opponents of the regime.

Hundreds of youth immediately took to the streets against the government, demanding Abiola's release. The next day, 1,000 market women were teargassed as they attempted another protest march. So far, the military and the northern Hausa elites allied to them have refused to back down, apparently seeking to continue their decades-long rule over Yoruba and Igbo regions of the West and South.

Abiola, who for a year has disappointed those who voted for him with his attempts at compromise, seems to have regained much support. Hardly a revolutionary, he is a billionaire businessman with close ties to the U.S.

French troops in Rwanda

On June 23, several hundred French troops crossed into Rwanda from Zaire on what was officially termed a UN-sanctioned humanitarian mission to stop the genocide which has claimed the lives of up to 500,000 people, mainly members of the Tutsi minority as well as people from the Hutu majority suspected of sympathy for the Tutsis. No one seriously believes that France's purpose is humanitarian, however.

Long the dominant outside power in much of Central and West Africa, France has for years backed the very Rwandan government and military who stand accused before the world. Not only did France openly arm the regime, but also according to Amnesty International, there is ample evidence that French "advisors" also helped to arm and to train the Interahamwe, the very militia which carried out the genocide in a cold, systematic, planned way, and which continues its murders on a small scale even today.

France stands out among former colonial powers in Africa for its continued success in dominating and controlling the post-colonial societies it once ruled directly, as well as some of those it did not, such as Rwanda, and to a certain extent even Zaire. Besides several previous interventions to prop up the Rwandan government since 1990, France has sent troops to Gabon in 1990, to the Comoros in 1989, and to Togo in 1986.

One of its biggest operations was in 1977 when thousands of French troops helped Zairean dictator Mobutu Sese-Seko thwart an invasion by opportunists. Today's intervention in Rwanda, which is based in Zaire, seems destined also to extend, at least a bit, Mobutu's rule once again, at a time when internal unrest has shaken his power as never before.

Bangladesh feminist in hiding

The Bangladeshi feminist writer Taslima Nasrin went into hiding in June when Islamic fundamentalists pressured the government to issue a warrant for her arrest. Nasrin was already a target of rightist religious parties who had put a price on her head for writing and speaking for women's liberation. The government claimed her "offense" was calling for a revision of the Koran.

While Bangladeshi women's groups and others have come to Nasrin's defense, it is clear she has become the rallying cry for religious factions to unite in their campaign for instituting Islamic law. They have also launched an attack against the non-religious press, including terrorist bombing of the publication which had previously run Nasrin's regular column. Recently some journalists were arrested for "offending religious sensibilities."

The religious right is now pressuring the government to pass sweeping "anti-blasphemy" laws which would muzzle criticism of religion and civil society. They aim to silence critics such as Nasrin, who wrote: "My main motto is let humanity be the other name of religion today. My main objective is to correct class and religious differences."

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NEWS & LETTERS

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'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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NEWS & LETTERS

celebrates the 150th anniversary of the birth of Marx's Humanism

Raya Dunayevskaya

On Karl Marx's ECONOMIC AND PHILOSOPHIC ESSAYS of 1844

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Every worker is an organizer



by Felix Martin, Labor Editor

The rise in the consciousness of the farm workers in California in self-organizing has begun. Over the last month these workers have won three elections, and a fourth is contested. The UFW (United Farm Workers) has negotiated two new contracts, one with a Coachella table grape grower, the first grape contract in a decade.

On the eve of the UFW's month-long pilgrimage from Delano to Sacramento in April and at stops along the way growers and farm groups dismissed the event. "It's the last gasp of a dying organization," said the Grapeworkers and Farmers Coalition, one of the enemies of anything that workers try to do for themselves.

Since May the state agricultural labor board, which had been silent since governors Deukmejian and Pete Wilson, has all of a sudden filed many complaints against growers who have refused to bargain. It is a clear response to the activity among the farm workers in the California fields.

The biggest aftershock came from the lopsided victory in July at Warmerdam farms in Kings County. Out of the 263 workers who voted, 220 voted for the union. State labor officials who oversaw the election were stunned. Bill Warmerdam said the workers "caught us by surprise." He is a third generation fruit grower who has never had to deal with organized workers before.

UFW President Arturo Rodriguez said the vote was the union's first in Kings County. "The workers at Warmerdam did it all. They formed their own commit-

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Black World

Of Black women and the South



Editor's note: As part of our ongoing coverage of the latest developments in the "New South," I am turning my column over this month to the following reflections from Diane Lee on her recent trip South.—Lou Turner

In his new book *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi*, John Dittmer explores what Lou Turner called in his column last month the South's "undisclosed realm of darkness." Dittmer writes "that northerners and southerners alike agreed that Mississippi was in a class by itself, 'the last vestige of a dead and despairing civilization.' The image of Mississippi as America's dungeon not only persisted but intensified over the [last] three decades" (pp. 9-10).

In his Afterword, Dittmer ends by talking about the numerous reunions and conferences on the Civil Rights Movement that had so changed the political geography of the South, evoking a sense of nostalgia for the past. He sees a continuity between the life and struggles of Fannie Lou Hamer and the Algebra Project of Bob Moses and Dave Dennis, as though the latter is the sole alternative to the present state of poverty and the seemingly dismal subjective response to it. But is this the kind of alternative that is needed to take us into a new society with new human relations?

We have seen such courageous new labor struggles as the one being waged by workers at Hood Furniture in Jackson, and the emergence of a statewide Black student movement around the Ayers case to preserve historically Black colleges. Nevertheless, whether the movement is against the power of private capital or state authoritarianism, the clear and present danger is what Charles Tis-

(Continued on page 8)

Western Europe in deep crisis: economic, political, intellectual

by Kevin A. Barry

Berlin, Germany—Some snapshots of Western Europe in crisis, July 1994:

● In Germany, three fascist youths receive several years in jail for their part in the infamous "hunt for foreigners" in Magdeburg in May.

● In France, 900 gather to hear prominent intellectuals denounce the French government's refusal to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia and its complicity with the genocide in Rwanda.

● In Italy, the new Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi is forced by popular outcry to rescind a decree curtailing the ongoing political corruption investigations, and then his own brother is arrested for bribery on behalf of the corporation they jointly run.

● In Britain, European parliament elections in June humiliate the ruling Conservatives, but by this time Labor has undergone a Clintonite transformation, moving closer to the Conservatives.

● As genocide, rape and "ethnic cleansing" continue in Bosnia, only a small minority of the European Left has come out in support of Bosnia, or even of lifting the arms embargo.

● The current recession, which has led to West European unemployment rates unknown since the 1930s, has sparked not so much labor unrest as the growth of racist, anti-immigrant sentiment.

In short, Western Europe is experiencing in 1994 its greatest economic crisis since the 1930s and its greatest political and cultural crisis since the 1960s. Yet, unlike these earlier periods when politics was polarized between



Mass anti-fascist demonstration in Wiesbaden, Germany.

Left and Right, today there is an amazing degree of unanimity between Left and Right, as the Left has given up even the pretense of standing for an alternative to capitalism. This does not mean that there are no counter-movements to the established order, but it does mean that these movements, often fragmentary, remain hemmed in by the reigning conception that bourgeois democracy and "free market" capitalism offer "the best of all possible worlds." Below I will assess briefly the situation in two of the most important West European countries, France and Germany.

FRANCE: CRITIQUE SANS MARXISM

In France, as the moribund economy shows continuing signs of weakness, the youth revolt which broke out this spring simmers below the surface. In July, after a small pro-Communist student federation launched protests against the absence of places at the University of Paris for 2500 students who had passed their baccalaureate exam, nervous administrators simply closed registration until September. With regard to women, Gisele Halimi of the feminist group Choisir has gained much support for her campaign to require that the French parliament include at least 25% women among its members.

(Continued on page 5)

Editorial

Rwanda, Haiti—twin apocalypse

There is something monstrous in our midst. It's not to be found on the lava plains of the Goma refugee camps in Africa's season of cholera. Nor is it found among the prancing despotism of Haiti's drug-trafficking colonels. It's found instead in the day-to-day savageries of "American civilization."

"To die," goes a Rwandan proverb, "is the ransom of life." Given the daily savageries of American society—poverty, predatory crime, homelessness, etc.—it is no wonder that life has been ransomed in the domestic and foreign policy of the Clinton Administration. The more unsettling fact is that it has become a dimension of the American mind.

How else to explain the U.S. response to the twin, but by no means identical, horrors of Rwanda and Haiti? How else to explain the despicable discussion of "national security interests" in the face of the genocidal apocalypse in the heart of Africa, and the raw military terror that has committed over 400 political murders just this year while instigating a mass exodus of some 50,000 Haitians since the 1991 coup that deposed Haiti's first democratically elected President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide?

Let us admit it. This country has been so preoccupied with its own social and political malaise, that it has for some time been indifferent to the genocidal effects of the foreign policy carried out in its "national interest." Military atrocities against civilian populations in the Panama invasion and the Gulf War seem only to have desensitized the American mind to "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia. And just as in Bosnia, in Haiti rape has become an instrument of terror which the U.S. embassy in Port-au-Prince has the unconscionable gall to dismiss as one of the "fabricated" human rights abuses that Aristide supporters "manipulate...as a propaganda tool!"

To be sure, America's declining ability to manage the proliferation of global crises reflects its declining ability to manage its own domestic crises. However, the corollary to this is: By what logic has the genocidal impulse become imbued in a people such that they commit the most heinous crimes in the name of national or ethnic identity? It is in their inseparability that these two questions form the starting point of any understanding of today's apocalyptic reality.

HAITI AND THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

In the very week, beginning August 1, that the UN au-

thorized the use of military force in Haiti to oust the military junta headed by Gen. Raoul Cedras (without setting any deadline), Bill Clinton announced at his press conference that he agreed with the unanimous Senate vote earlier that day that the U.S. is not bound by UN authorization and time-tables. Translation: the heat is off Haiti's military tyranny.

Clinton has gained a foreign policy with a Black face to deflect charges of racism (making former Congressman Bill Gray his point man on Haiti, and even dispatching Jesse Jackson to be his emissary in the simmering Nigeria crisis). As a foreign policy devised more for public consumption at home than for any genuine concern for

(Continued on page 8)

Haitians oppose U.S. invasion

Editor's note: We received the following report from a young woman journalist with the Haitian Information Bureau, July 20.

Port-au-Prince—On July 19th about 13 popular organizations gathered to sign a document to call for a mobilization and for the return of democracy back to Haiti. They also called for no intervention. They published a report about the political situation in Haiti and they said "no intervention."

The repression is now generalized in the whole country. Last week people in the south of Port-au-Prince found 12 bodies in the street killed by gunfire. Yesterday people in canal-au-coeil found three severed heads.

The popular movements in Haiti need very strong solidarity to fight. We do not need military intervention in Haiti. People can help us build democracy by helping us to build our own resistance.

It is very hard for journalists to work on the streets. The defacto regime says they will arrest any journalist who calls them "defacto regime." There are a lot of attacks against the personnel. Journalists are under a lot of pressure from the civilian army. For example a lot of press releases were sent to a radio station to put pressure on the journalists.

Who defines battered women's struggles?

by Anna Maillon

Domestic violence is a personal issue, and the personal is political. There can be no denying its intimate relationship to all forms of exploitation and repression. As a mental health worker in the area of domestic violence, I have been disturbed by the hypocrisy of the capitalist media's coverage of Nicole Simpson's murder. Capitalism is a predator, exploiting our pain, shame, fear and hunger any way it can.

This story would be a public relations victory for feminists were it not for its tragedy and the fact that since the 19th century African-American men have been falsely scapegoated as the greatest danger to white women. Although African-American men are no exception to what Karl Marx pointed out, that "the infinite degradation in which man exists for himself is expressed in his relation to women," still, if fingers were pointed with the same urgency at white men guilty of rape, sexual harassment, child abuse and domestic violence, imagine the numbers, the revolutionary impact!

Are the lives and dignity of African-American men to be sacrificed for the lives and dignity of women? Or vice versa? Are these revolutionary dimensions pitted against one another in the legal and media circuses? In the street? Once a gladiator bound body and soul to the media, Mr. Simpson is apparently still fair game. Can we expect women to ever live freely and safely in a society that buys, sells and discards any one of us at will? We can't let the media play with our heads if we're about freedom.

For the same reason we can't allow the abuse and murder of women to keep on slipping by. Women of all races have been gathering in front of the television at the battered women's shelter where I work, wondering how the Simpson story will end up, how it will affect their lives. In their-our-world men are let off the hook for their abuses all the time. The denial and woman-blaming with which "society" receives news of men's misogynistic behaviors is a part of the reality this capitalist patriarchy expects us to accept.

Within patriarchy, male "batterers" count on a system of values which, if not overtly condoning their violence, supports the "logic" behind it. Battering is not a loss of control; it is the establishment of control. And most of it is done in non-physical ways.

A Mexican Indian woman who stayed recently at our shelter said she had repeatedly asked her husband to treat her like a human being: "You treat me like a thing, like a piece of furniture you never think about, as if I had no mind or feelings. Sex is your right, no matter what I want. I'm like a chair you sit in or get out of according to your convenience." For confronting him she was beaten. And after leaving him she feared for her life.

I have worked at three different battered women's shelters. These "safe houses," originally the underground railroad of the battered women's movement,

started in the early '70s in the homes of women, many themselves previously battered. Many participants were lesbians. Many were women of color. It was a movement in which the empowerment of women was not an act of charity but a process of rebellion and self-definition. There was excitement that relationships between men and women, women and women, men and men, and adults and children would be transformed. Their voices could no longer be ignored.

And then? Legal definitions of abuse were developed. Statistics were taken. The FBI stated that 30% of female homicide victims are killed by husbands or boyfriends. Three to four million U.S. women are battered each year. The government concluded medical and legal institutions should take preventative measures to avoid "wasting" money on domestic violence fallout. The battered women's movement became one more element of the bourgeois, bureaucratic structure of social reforms dependent on state funding and charity organizations.

And the experiences of battered women was reduced to an emotional dysfunction: codependency. "Why do women stay?" was the question, not "Why do men batter?"

This society, based on racist, classist, sexist "norms," encourages us to believe that we all get what we deserve and deserve what we get. This attitude, together with social science's insistence on "value neutral objectivity," tends to "mask the male domination underlying violence against women" as James Patek writes. "Clinical and criminal justice responses to battering are revealed as ideological in the light of their collusion with batterers' rationalizations."

Only a few "maverick" feminist therapists and social workers have challenged the so-called objectivity of science by pointing out that the privileged status of men as husbands in this society makes domestic violence virtually inevitable or "normal." Aside from the temporary beds available at substance-level shelters, the "solution" to domestic violence has been deflated from a vision of human revolution to a dead end of research and psychological treatment.

As Raya Dunayevskaya put it in *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*, "Capitalism tries to use everything for its power. That's why Marx criticized science under capitalism and said it was not neutral—'To have one basis for life and another for science is a priori a lie.' He said that phrase in the same essay, 1844, *Private Property and Communism*, in which he discussed how pivotal is the Man/Woman relationship, and not only the class struggle."

For the Los Angeles police, the courts and the media to have suddenly become great defenders of battered women is suspect. I once went to the same police department and the same courthouse seeking protection from a violent husband, and experienced misdirection and humiliation. It's time for us—revolutionary women and men—to take the struggle against the abuse of women back into our own hands—and heads.

Woman as Reason

International groups denounce repression

Editor's note: Below we publish excerpts from the "Final Declaration of the 1st International Meeting of Mothers and Women Who Struggle," dated March 30, 1994, sent to us by the Madres de Plaza de Mayo of Argentina.

Gathered in Paris and coming from different countries, we have managed to debate in depth during several days topics that made us feel as if we all came from the same place. Discrimination, persecution, torture, rape, militarism, exploitation and racism were common experiences. All of this has brought into the open women from different worlds who express the same opinions.

In our clamor we rejected all oppressing systems, even those which call themselves democratic because they implement economic models in which profits are more important than human life.

Authoritarian governments continue to repress their people turning to assassinations, disappearances, torture

and jailing of all those who dissent. Formal democracies cloaked in appearances of guaranteeing freedom implement economic models that sacrifice and marginalize sections of society through unemployment, lack of sanitary assistance or poverty. They are frequently unjust systems, where hunger and environmental pollution are as mortal as bullets, to which they also turn when the degree of repression demands it.

Another tragic phenomenon is the manipulation of the legitimate right of people to their language and cultural characteristics, which exacerbates nationalism as a form of political control that risks leading to tragedies that bring about death and destruction to these same peoples.

While there exists a single tortured or disappeared person, while there is a single child who dies of hunger or is assassinated on the streets, while the system continues to marginalize young people through drugs, while Mafias continue to be anti-states within the state, while women are discriminated against and raped, there can be neither freedom nor democracy.

This collective of women of the world commits itself to working to transform human relations, so that children and the young are able to receive an education in which solidarity, freedom, equality, respect for the environment and defense of human rights mark out the path towards peace and coexistence. While also supporting the development of a civil society.

The following organizations signed this declaration: Madres de Plaza de Mayo of Argentina • ACARI (Mothers of Assassinated Street/Disadvantaged Children) of Brazil • CONAVIGUA (National Coordinating Body of Guatemalan Widows) • COFADEH (Relatives of the Detained/Disappeared of Honduras) • Women in Black of Israel • PFWA (Palestine Federation of Women's Action) • Palestine Human Rights Information Centre • ANFASEP (National Association of Relatives of the Kidnapped, Detained and Disappeared of Ayacucho, Peru) • AFAPREDESA (Association of Relatives of the Disappeared of the Saharan Republic) • "Mama 56" Kiev Mothers Group of the Ukraine • Centre for Anti-War Action of Belgrade • Belgrade Women in Black • Sarajevo Women's Movement • Centre for Women War Victims of Zagreb • Women Against the Mafia of Italy • Association of Mothers of Conscientious Objectors and the Insubordinate Green-Scarved Women.

♀ Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey



Japanese women students marched in Tokyo, July 27, demanding fair treatment for women in the job market. Their banners read: "No sexual harassment," "No discrimination for female students" and "To work is the people's right; the companies must fulfill their duties."

Women's and human rights organizations are mounting international support for 117 Tunisian women who have been interrogated, harassed and threatened by police after signing an appeal for democracy and freedom. The women, including academics, lawyers, journalists and doctors, condemned "serious attacks on the foundations of a tolerant and pluralist society" and called for "respect for freedom and fundamental rights which are the only guarantors for dignity in our country."

—Information from *Women Living Under Muslim Laws*

The Sisterhood is Global Institute is demanding that the Clinton administration condemn human rights abuses in Haiti, especially the growing use of rape as a primary tactic in the political oppression of Haitian women. Human Rights Watch and the National Coalition for Haitian Refugees have charged Haitian soldiers, police and their armed civilian thugs with using rape to intimidate women who support or whose male friends or family members support exiled President Aristide. Despite evidence of such violence, the U.S. government has denied political asylum to women who have been raped.

Pro-Choice in shadow of Pensacola murders

Chicago—As we go to press, the news of a fatal attack on abortion providers and their supporters is shaking pro-choice activists around the country. On July 29, Dr. John Britton, a doctor who performed abortions in Pensacola, Florida, and James H. Barrett, a volunteer escort for the clinic, were killed by a protester wielding a shotgun who opened fire at the two men's heads. June Barrett, the wife of the slain volunteer, and a volunteer herself, was wounded.

This double murder occurs 16 months after the slaying of Dr. David Gunn, another abortion provider in Pensacola. Paul Hill, the killer of Britton and Barrett, is a religious fanatic who has appeared on *Nightline* and *The Donahue Show* advocating violence against abortion providers.

Obviously this is a reminder that the anti-abortion "protest" movement has become increasingly violent and extremist. Anti-choice zealots have become more intent on harassing and threatening volunteers, medical staff and women seeking services instead of fighting their battles in the courts and legislatures. For the past few years, harassment has become so acute as to frighten women away from clinics, often forcing them to return on a later day. Women lose extra days of work and must rearrange childcare and travel arrangements due to the intimidation known in the anti-abortion movement as "sidewalk counseling." This shooting is an extension of that strategy.

The effects of harassment and intimidation against medical staff and volunteers have a direct effect on access. Bomb threats are routine. Volunteer escorts are harassed at clinics and in their homes. Doctors' children and their playmates have been confronted at elementary schools with graphic pictures of fetuses and the like. Fewer and fewer medical students are learning to do abortions as more ob/gyn residencies in teaching hospitals do not offer the procedure as part of the standard curriculum.

Women in the rural West and the deep South have been particularly hard hit by this strategy. With few doctors trained in the procedure, and laws that prohibit nurse practitioners, midwives or physicians' assistants from performing abortions, finding an abortion provider in places like Pensacola is nearly impossible.

Dr. Britton was the only provider for miles around. Reports are that he was not always respectful or sensitive to women, sometimes refusing to do the procedure if he was not convinced by their reasons for wanting it. Unfortunately, women had nowhere else to go in the county. Now that a doctor and a volunteer are gone, women of the Pensacola area will have even fewer options.

—Maggie Thompson

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The war at work and labor's power

New York—The trucking company where I work is at war against the dock men. The company wants to replace them with "combination" jobs, where the dock worker has to hold a trailer license so he can move trailers if needed. But a war has two sides.

Those left working, including the combination men, know if we work slower they will have to bring in our buddies who aren't working. The power we have is to make sure the trucks don't get loaded on time. Management has the power to come up with these efficiency plans and productivity schemes; we have the power to produce less. It's a war every night.

We wanted the union delegate to come down and negotiate on this. He was too busy. Anyway, he wouldn't have done anything; he just goes along with what the TM (terminal manager) says. So we took care of things ourselves.

The best thing that happened was our steward transferred to another terminal. So when all this came down, we had no shop steward. Instead of the usual—telling the steward he had to do something and then grumbling and complaining when nothing happened—a number of guys just started acting like stewards and went in the office and argued with the TM. The result of all this "negotiating" and getting the trucks out late: we saved two dock jobs.

The war is not over. We still work slow. One young guy used to zip around on that hilo and do 150% to 200% productivity. Then his uncle got laid off, and he's making sure his productivity won't go over 100%. He says he's looking out for his family.

A driver told him: You have to work slow all the time, not just when your uncle is off. How about Sam and Willy, two good guys who worked the dock as casuals, but now the company "doesn't need them"? They need jobs too. If the older drivers hadn't kept their productivity down, we would never have been hired, he said.

We had the power to bring back two men on our job. We had more power than we knew because that shop steward had stood in our way for so many years. When he was gone, it lifted a block from our minds and we found our voices. We stopped waiting for someone to be steward. We started talking to everyone about what we should do and doing it.

Labor does have that power to do things ourselves, but the union often gets in the way. You wait for the union to act, and then you complain. We do need a union and a contract. We could not slow down and fight the boss if he

could just fire us. It is the contract that permits us to do this; let's not forget that.

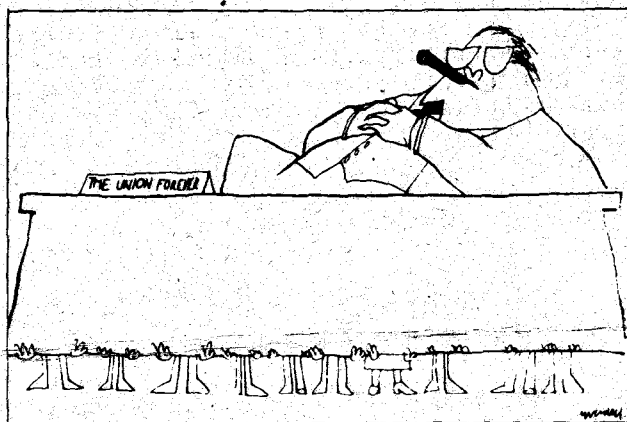
The greatest power we have is not just working slow; it is withholding our labor. I call it the personal strike. The supervisor gets you mad, so you book off (call in sick) on Friday, just when they need you most. Some guys take a day off once in a while just for the pleasure of showing them you can hurt them too.

So we do have more power in our hands than we know, but we are still chained to the job, and that we accept as normal. One thing that doesn't get discussed is, why don't we get rid of management? I guess we know we don't need them. We're just used to that relationship; it seems the only way things could be. When our steward left, it lifted a block from our minds in a small way. What kind of upheaval would lift this bigger block from our minds, to where we could see we have all the power if we only take it?

The power to withhold our labor is a great power. I don't agree with unions being willing to give it up in the face of court injunctions and scabs. Unions now push in-plant strategies, leafletting stockholder meetings and boycotts as the new way to fight. Those can bring people together, but they don't compare to the power of withholding your labor.

I bet if the AFL-CIO didn't stand in our way, workers would have expanded some of these hard strikes, taken it on themselves to spread the strikes no matter what a judge said. We know what it means when they attack one of us, and we want to stand together. I see that on my job.

—John Marcotte



Community-based workers' centers meet

New York—Representatives from 20 "workers' centers" around the country met here July 8-10 to discuss the new labor movement emerging from their community-based groups. Many led by women, the centers help workers to fight for their rights and sometimes to unionize, while also addressing their other concerns.

At a public forum attended by 200 people, Young Shin of Asian Immigrant Women's Advocates in Oakland discussed the development of such centers in the early 1980s as a response to a changing economy which emphasizes "flexible" workers and non-manufacturing jobs, and a changing political climate which is anti-union and encourages the exploitation of immigrants, women and people of color.

Maria del Carmen of La Mujer Obrera in El Paso said her group "has always had a process for developing women's leadership. We want genuine social, economic and political power for workers, and workers' centers are the only place in our community where workers can learn to struggle."

She described their experience with the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union: "The union gets away

with saying it represents workers when in fact it is paternalistic and doesn't include women as leaders. It divided the work force from the community. We need our own methods and models to rescue our identity as workers and to carry out our struggle with dignity. The old union movement won't change its form of organizing, so a new movement is the only alternative."

JoAnn Lum of the Chinese Staff and Workers Association (CSWA) in New York discussed the need for a new labor movement: "Today everyone talks about being pragmatic and is resigned to narrow choices. We debate within the framework of those in power and choose what is less bad instead of what we want. In addition to the structural changes in the economy and the globalization of labor and capital, the government has passed laws and pushed ideas that are divisive. People are fighting for crumbs. Divisions by race, anti-immigrant, etc., depend on accepting scarcity."

"In Chinatown, the laws that are supposed to protect workers are ignored. Many restaurant workers make 70¢ an hour and garment workers, \$1 an hour. Ninety percent of the 500 garment shops in Chinatown are unionized, but the people are actually making \$2 an hour, less than they make in nonunion factories in midtown."

"The social services agencies in the community mostly tell people to learn English and get out. Some are worse, like the Chinese American Planning Council, which gets millions of dollars to do training and then uses the trainees to work on public projects for low wages."

"When we try to use the labor and anti-discrimination laws, we are told that we came too late or didn't know how to make a complaint, in short, that we are the problem. We need a new labor movement, where people feel entitled and will fight, relying on their own power and defining their own political agenda."

"Our issues are not only economic; we don't look at workers only as tools to make things. We take positions on many other things: men, women, parents, health care, schools, gay and lesbian rights, etc. These are all workers' issues. People change their thinking through struggle. The fight is not just about getting a contract, but about going way beyond to the changes we want."

Jerome Scott of Project South in Atlanta related the national attacks on workers, on the unemployed and on welfare. Project South concentrates on the 30% of the labor force that is temporary, part-time and day labor. "This population is transient, so our center has to be a place to come together, to offer some survival services, and also to do political education and research. We need to overcome ideologies that infect us all: white chauvinism, male chauvinism, anti-immigrant," he said.

In the discussion that followed Wing Lam of CSWA said, "Workers' centers are not just a new tactic, they are a new content to the labor movement. The unions failed and there is no chance of reforming them. Even if you took over the unions, you couldn't get better wages under the system today. We are into changing the system."

—Conference participant

Temping for survival

Oklahoma City—General Motors is having a "Jobs Fair" the week of Aug. 8, but listen to what they are doing: letting people with seniority move to other plants and giving early retirement incentives! Then management and UAW Local 1999 are working through the International to get people hired for \$12.75 per hour for as long as two years. They would be considered temporaries!—with minimum benefit packages different from other workers that are already there. I see the future of auto workers and all workers being sold out.

The people who take these \$12.75 positions will be doing the same work as other workers who make \$18.50 an hour. The workers coming in probably aren't giving up high-paying jobs. It doesn't matter that it's only two years; it's the dream of being able to struggle a little less. We, as workers, aren't left with many chances so we do things out of need, not because we have a choice.

I went to work for a company as a temporary and busted my butt to get a permanent job with good—or should I say better—wages and benefits. They had about 40 temps. You had to pass a test and see who could kiss ass for three stinking jobs! In some ways it's the same as being raped or robbed.

Capitalism takes not only the physical toil, but the dignity as well. I just know that if I can see this more workers see the same thing, but it's like the decision whether to survive or be swallowed up. It's not any worker's fault that they can't just stop and put an end to the problem.

Just being aware and talking and even writing about the horrible things that capitalists do to us is a start. I myself would like to take some kind of step to let these capitalists know that I am very aware of the things that they are doing for more profit from my labor and sweat!

—Working woman

Chicago—I've been working as a temporary in factories since 1987. Tonight I'm probably going to lose a whole night's pay because the damn bus didn't come for a half hour. If you're not there when the jobs come in you don't work. Last night I was sent to a factory that made cookies, and I spent the night standing in cookie dough all over the floor.

I work at Helene Curtis a lot, but they always call in more people than they really need. If they call you in they're supposed to pay you for a minimum of four hours, but they always try to cheat you out of that.

Another place made me so mad because they gave us our breaks and our lunch all in the first three hours and had us standing on our feet for the last five hours straight. We can't let them treat temps like that. We've got to fight back. If your paper wants stories from workers, I've got a lot of stories.

—Woman at the bus stop

'We selected our own union'

Editor's note: More than 200 workers, all Black and nearly all women, at Somerville Mills voted in 1988 for representation by Furniture Workers Local 282, but have yet to win a first contract. I. Appel, the New Jersey-based parent corporation, owns other plants in Tennessee with contracts with the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU). The ILGWU refused to assist the Somerville Mills negotiating committee by providing copies of those contracts.

Somerville, Tenn.—I truly feel that Somerville Mills has fear of the strength of Local 282 simply because Local 282 has one of the best reputations for supporting their workers. And I repeat that: They truly support their workers. They don't bend, they don't twist; they don't go behind the workers' backs. Companies nowadays want to be able to buy what they want, and Local 282 doesn't want to deal with anybody like that.

Two ladies from ILGWU came up on the plant parking lot two days before we had our election and tried to get union cards signed to intervene in our campaign. I know the company had something to do with it because Bob Young, one of the company's managers, came to the door and he was laughing, looking out there at those ladies. Later that evening, those cards came up in a meeting with the company.

At several of our negotiations, one of the company men told us that if we had let ILGWU represent us we would have had a contract. We say that we're not going to let that company select our union for us, because when that company came into Fayette County, there was no union. They could just as well have brought ILGWU in then and given us a contract as they did when they brought them in to try and destroy our campaign.

We selected our own representatives. We knew who we wanted. If we had given in to the company like that, we'd have still been letting the company choose for us.

—Black women workers

The need to spell out the role that a Marxist-Humanist organization can play today flows from the changing nature of today's objective situation. Foremost in this is the way the crises of existing society are leading many to question the talk about 'the death of Marxism' as a bit premature.*

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*From "The objectivity of philosophy in today's world crises," July 1994, *News & Letters*
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Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

tees and signed up their own co-workers," he said. I hope this message will get to the CIO misleadership to stop meddling in the workers' affairs and get back to representing the workers. Workers are thinkers; they don't need to be led. Every worker is an organizer.

In the early 1970s the UFW had contracts with 80% of the grape growers in the San Joaquin valley. Two decades later not a single contract remained. The movement got transformed from struggling in the fields to boycotts, to writing to Congressmen. Workers know that the government is owned and controlled by capitalism. They know that together workers can produce the world or destroy it, and the capitalists and their bureaucratic bootlickers are the lice that feed off workers' labor.

Trade unions are part of the capitalist control over the workers. The truth of that lies in how the capitalists along with the union leadership have used automation to replace millions of workers' jobs and have not reduced the hours of work each day to keep every worker employed at a higher standard of living.

I also see the beginning of a new labor movement in the South. The Black women, like those at Somerville Mills, don't want to give up their self-won power to a union leader. As a wage slave, retired, who has spent his life in the labor struggle, I see the thinking of these Black women as a higher level of thinking, a great leap in cognition. I also see the importance of this Marxist-Humanist organization, News and Letters Committees, present to give support to that self-development of workers taking back their power to think for themselves.

From the Archives of Marxist-Humanism

The Writings of
RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

Editor's Note

One hundred and fifty years ago this summer, Karl Marx completed what became known as the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. In celebration of that historic beginning of Marx's humanism, we publish a writing by Raya Dunayevskaya that explores those "Humanist Essays." The piece reproduced here is a 1968 draft of Chapter 2 of Dunayevskaya's *Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973).

The Humanist Essays were rediscovered by Dunayevskaya as she developed her theory of state-capitalism in the 1940s. Her translations of "Private Property and Communism" and "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" were the first of Marx's Humanist Essays published in English when they came out as an appendix to her 1958 *Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today*. The writing excerpted here can be found in its entirety in the *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, microfilm number 4227.

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

Introduction

As established Marxism has proven more than once, the attempt to sunder Marxism by separating its "scientific materialism" from its "Hegelian idealism" does not cleanse its advocates of "Hegelianism," but, on the contrary, leads them directly to the same mire where Hegel ended: glorification of the state, the "mediator" between opposing forces that remain irreconcilable. Because Marx had foreseen the possibility of just such a development—and due not merely to personal opportunism but for the vastly more substantial reason of a fatal flaw within the given philosophy of freedom—he warned his co-revolutionaries: "We should especially avoid re-establishing society as an abstraction, opposed to the individual. The individual is the social entity." (p. 295)¹ This statement in the essay "Private Property and Communism" is part of the now-famous *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts, 1844*.

The year 1844 was a crucial one both in objective developments such as the revolt of the Silesian weavers² and as the point of origin of Marx's historical materialism.³ Thus, two forces quite distinct from each other and unbeknown to each other, working independently in vastly different spheres of endeavor which seemed worlds apart, were each "preparing" for the revolution that would in four years cover the entire continent of Europe. The coincidence of the spontaneous proletarian outbursts and a worked-out theory of liberation fairly riveted the world's attention on the author of the *Communist Manifesto*, as a revolutionary, as founder of a new world view of history, a new unity of theory and practice that very nearly transformed the world.

1. ...Except where otherwise noted, I am using my own translation, especially the one of "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," as they appeared as Appendices to *Marxism and Freedom*, Twayne, N.Y., 1958, first edition.

2. Here is how the young Marx hailed this uprising: "The wisdom of the German poor stands in inverse ratio to the wisdom of poor Germany... The Silesian uprisings began where the French and English insurrections ended, with the consciousness of the proletariat as a class..."

3. Marx himself never used the term; both "historic materialism" and "dialectic materialism" were coined by Engels. Marx himself preferred the more precise though longer phrases such as "the mode of production in material life" or "material base," and "the dialectic method" or simply "revolutionary." In the essays under discussion here, he calls his philosophy "humanist," later it was "Communist," still later "Internationalist," and at all times "revolutionary." Nevertheless, as a shorthand term, and because the quintessential distinction always was historic as both movement and change, that is, not permanent but transitory, we will here use the term historic materialism to designate that materialist conception of history which was specifically Marxian.

Trace the todayness of Marx's
Economic and Philosophic
Manuscripts of 1844

"The real question is not why there was a historic break with Hegel in the mid-nineteenth century, when new revolutions covered Europe, but why, after the break, there has been a continuous return to Hegel by the creator of historical materialism and theorist of proletarian revolution, Marx..."

Philosophy and
Revolution
From Hegel to Sartre
and from Marx to Mao

(Original edition 1973; new expanded edition 1989; also available in Spanish, German, Italian, Russian)

See literature ad on page 7.

Not a trace of Hegelian "language" seems to have been left in the new philosophy of revolution. And, indeed, as against both Marx's theory of liberation and the actual freedom struggles, Hegel's mere concept of freedom, even where it reflected a historic drive, was history as finished, as past events, not as present, much less as anticipation of the future. Yet it was no accident that Marx saw the emergence of revolution not only as result of empiric, that is immediate class struggles, but out of the logic of class struggles, out of the dialectic of historical development, for Marx's vision was rooted in the idea of a philosophy of history which Hegel had propounded. And it was the Hegelian dialectic which he re-created and which gave his materialist conception of history so distinct a quality that he could separate himself not only from "idealists" but from "materialists," Feuerbach included. Because the dialectic was not, as with Hegel, restricted to thought, but was the dialectic of actual history, he was enabled also to see as the "subject," as the "negativity" that would transform the world—the proletariat—and with [this subject was] propelled to shape

the future instead of merely "contemplating" the past or present.

There is no doubt as to its originality or world-shaking significance. But it would not have come to be without Hegel. Nor could he have fought Hegel's idealism without Hegel's dialectic. But it was not out of mere indebtedness to Hegel that Marx presented his view, not as mere opposition of materialism to idealism, but as their "unity." Rather it was the positive in his revolutionary vision that led him to write, in his "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," that "thorough-going Naturalism, or Humanism, distinguishes itself both from Idealism and Materialism, and is, at the same time, the truth uniting both... Only Naturalism is capable of grasping the act of world history."

The 1840s: From a Critic of Hegel to
the Author of the *Communist Manifesto*

Within little more than a decade since Hegel's death, in 1831, Hegelianism, as a philosophy, was not only splintered between conservative Old Hegelians and radical Young Hegelians, but—and this is what is truly decisive—it was being undermined by the new objective situation that was bringing onto the historic stage a proletariat more mature than Hegel had ever confronted. Marx's debt to Hegel, however, began not so much on the day he became a Young Hegelian in college but, on the contrary, on the day he broke with the whole of bourgeois society, Young Hegelians included, and began settling scores with his "philosophic conscience." It turned out to be "A Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right" and, as all the other works of that period—1844-1847—this turned out to be a critique also of Hegel's critics.

He no sooner stated that "man makes religion; religion does not make man,"⁴ than he moved away from atheism, as such, as well as from philosophical materialism (Feuerbach) and all existing tendencies, to throw out a Promethean challenge: "The immediate task of philosophy, which is in the service of history, is to unmask human self-alienation in its secular form now that it has been unmasked in its sacred form... It is with good reason that the practical political party in Germany demands the negation of philosophy." Its error lies in thinking "that it can achieve this negation by turning its back on philosophy, looking elsewhere, murmuring a few trite and ill-humored phrases... you cannot abolish philosophy without realizing it."⁵ Just how thorough he himself was can be seen clearest as he grappled with Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* and *Encyclopedia* in his next essay, "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic."

This essay is a work of such "seriousness, suffering, patience and labor of the negative," to use a Hegelian phrase, that, though the reader too "suffers" (since he or she is presented, not with ready-made conclusions, but with the act of creativity itself), he finds that he has been made witness to the origination of the Marxian dialectic, historic materialism.

Once Marx reaches Hegel's *Phenomenology*, he states its simple facts—"Hegel regards human essence, Man, as equal to self-consciousness. All alienation of human essence is, therefore, no more than alienation of self-consciousness"—but [also] elicits the contradiction within [it]: "The actual alienation, which appears as real, is... nothing but the appearance of the alienation of actual human essence..." (p. 311) No wonder that what was "regarded as the essence of alienation, which is posed and to be transcended, is not the fact that human essence materializes itself in an inhuman manner in opposition to itself, but the fact that it materializes itself from and in opposition to, abstract thinking." (p. 309) Now that Marx has shown the inadequacy of Hegel's strongest point, his theory of alienation, he brings about a confrontation between the great merit of Hegelian philosophy—"its thoroughly negative and critical character"—and the fatal flaw inherent in a philosophy which appropriates objects only as thought and movements of thought, for "hidden in embryo (is) the latent potentiality and secret of uncritical positivism and equally uncritical idealism [of the later Hegelian works]—philosophic

disintegration and resurrection of extant Empiricism." (p. 308)

Having thrown a glaring light on the development that will result, Marx moves back to hammer away at the contradictions already existing. Despite, for example, its phenomenal achievement—"the dialectic of negativity as the moving and creating principle"—which enabled Hegel to grasp "the essence of labor and conceives objective man, true, actual man as the result of his own labor," (p. 309) and despite "the positive moment"—"transcendence as objective movement"—the limitations of abstract thought, the restriction of knowing only mental labor, and the fact that "knowing is its sole act" all lead to reducing transcendence to mere appearance. "Thus, after transcending, for example, religion, after the recognition of religion as a product of self-alienation, he still finds himself confirmed in religion as religion... Man who has recognized that in law, politics, etc., he is leading an alienated life, pursues in this alienated life, as such, his true human life." (p. 317) Marx now hammers away at the "lie of his principle... Thus reason is at home in

unreason as unreason."

In effect, what Marx is now saying is that the total dichotomy between the philosophic world where alienations were "transcended" and the actual world where they are as big as life is proof enough that the philosophic world is bereft of practice, that existence didn't enter the world of essence, and Hegel's Absolute, far from achieving a unity of thought and reality, only compelled accommodation to reality. And the Other of that world of beautiful Reason, abstract rationalism, is total irrationality of the true, existing world. The manuscript breaks off before Marx has carried through the promise that "We will see later why Hegel separates thinking from the subject." (p. 323) But, in the process of his struggle with Hegel's concepts on Hegel's ground, he has pointed to how different the problems would be when "actual corporeal Man, standing on firm and well rounded earth, inhaling and exhaling all natural forces" becomes "Subject" and the philosophy, Humanism, that has Man at its center would be "capable of grasping the act of world history."

This, however, is not the culminating point of the essay, which is the last of the 1844 manuscripts that had dealt with alienated labor, private property, capital, communism. In these he not only criticized natural scientists whose "abstract materialism" blinds them to the fact that "To have one basis for life and another for science is a priori a lie," (p. 300) but he also took issue with political economy which begins with labor as the source of all value but proceeds to attribute nothing to labor and everything to private property. Marx holds that:

"Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided that any kind of object is ours only when we have it, i.e., when it exists for us as capital, or when we possess it directly—eat it, drink it, wear it, live in it, etc.—in short use it... In place of all the physical and spiritual senses, there is the sense of possession, which is the simple alienation of all these senses... seeing, hearing, smell, taste, feeling, thought, perception, experience, wishing, activity, loving... To such absolute poverty has human essence had to be reduced in order to give birth to its inner wealth!" (pp. 296-297)

He naturally levels his attack against the capitalist "or whatever one calls the lord of labor" and has already introduced a totally new concept, as his theory of alienation, though based on Hegel's, moves to the solid ground of production and alienated labor as the center of its development. This new term which we will see in its most mature form in his greatest theoretical work, *Capital*, is "reification," transformation of man into a thing, which the capitalist process of production does to the laborer. But an ambiguity was apparent when he stated that "communism, as such, is not the goal of human development, the form of human society" since Marx also gave communism high praise: "It is the solution of the riddle of history and knows itself as this solution."

Suddenly, in the midst of the essay on Hegel, precisely at the moment when Marx (in opposition to Feuerbach's criticism of the "negation of the negation") stresses the "positive moments of the Hegelian dialectic"—"transcendence as objective movement"—he returns to the question of communism. He wrote that "communism is humanism mediated by the transcendence of private property. Only by the transcendence of this mediation, which is nevertheless a necessary presupposition, does there arise positive Humanism, beginning from itself." (p. 319-20)

The very idea of taking up the birth of "positive Humanism" as the result of the second negation after communism, in a defense of Hegel against Feuerbach who at the beginning of the essay was credited with nothing short of having "transcended the old philosophy," is truly phenomenal. Here is Marx, who had already broken with the Young Hegelians and who was so sharply antagonistic to Hegel's abstractions which cover up loopholes in his theory of alienation. Marx holds that Hegel reduces transcendence to accommodation with the irrational world; he calls the key concept of Otherness, of absorbing objectivity, nothing short of the "lie of his principle." Here Marx finally stood Hegel "right side

(Continued on page 11)

4. Karl Marx: Early Writings, trans. T.B. Bottomore p. 43.

5. Ibid., pp. 44, 50.

Western Europe crisis: economic, political, intellectual

(Continued from page 1)

The draconian anti-immigrant laws passed by the current rightist government remain in effect as France experiences jitters over the prospect of tens of thousands of "boat people" arriving on its shores if, as many have predicted, its former colony Algeria were to fall to Islamic fundamentalists. Already in a celebrated case in July, 22-year-old Nadia Elkebir confronted the French government with a request for political asylum. Having fled Algeria in 1992 after her life was threatened by fundamentalists because of her secular lifestyle and in order to escape a forced marriage to a man old enough to be her father, she stated that in Algeria today: "For the men of the Islamic Salvation Front, a woman is a movable vagina. I want to let them know that a woman can think and is not there to make the bread every day and a child every year" (Le Monde, 7/3-4/94). In grudgingly granting her asylum request, the court was careful to deny claims by her lawyers that Algerian women as a whole are a "persecuted group."

Intellectuals have continued their human rights campaigns with respect to Bosnia and Rwanda. The 900-strong meeting in Paris in July at the Odeon Theater was called by the journal *La Règle du jeu*, a voice of "new philosophers" such as Bernard-Henry Levi and Andre Glucksmann, to follow up an earlier attempt to form a "Sarajevo Slate" in the June European elections.

The declaration adopted at the July meeting pointed not only to Bosnia, but also to Rwanda and Algeria as places where new forms of totalitarianism were already in place. It castigated the French government for its complicity with the genocidal Rwandan regime and took a strong pro-Bosnia stance as well. The "Appel de l'Odeon" also stated: "The century which is ending was that of totalitarianism. The disappearance of Na-

zism...then that of Communism...allowed us to believe for a moment that the spirit of democracy had triumphed definitively. The truth is that a new nationalism, grounded in ethnicity, has rushed in to fill the empty space....Faced with this return to barbarism, the response of democratic governments has revealed itself to be a failure married to a capitulation" (Le Monde, 7/14/94).

Despite their general empirical accuracy, such formulations do not—and in fact refuse to—discuss any fundamental type of alternative to the corrupt, racist, oppressive so-called "democracy" found in France and Western Europe today. This is in no small part because several of the signers of the declaration, the former "new philosophers" of the 1970s, are among France's most virulent critics of socialism and especially of any form of Marxism, all the while continuing to consider themselves on the Left. They refuse to recognize that it is the form of democracy under capitalism which is a major part of the problem.

In his recent book, *Les Spectres de Marx*, the famous French philosopher Jacques Derrida has savagely attacked "the dominant discourse" today wherein "Marx is dead, communism is dead, and a good thing, with its hopes, its discourse, its theories and its positions—long live capitalism, long live the market, economic and political liberalism live again." Derrida has called for a rereading of Marx, calling Marx perhaps the most relevant philosopher to help us come to grips with today's crises. Yet despite Derrida's fame, the book has not made a very large impact so far in France.

In Germany, where at least in the West, Marxism was never tied as closely to Communism as in France, the lingering influence of radical philosophers such as those of the Frankfurt School means that Marxist and dialectical thought continues at least in some form. At the same

time, abstract forms of radical thought such as Adorno's dead end of a "negative dialectics" or the Kantian liberalism of Habermas' "theory of communicative action" do not offer concrete perspectives to activists seeking to combat racism, sexism or classism. This may be related to the failure of most German Left intellectuals even to debate the Bosnia issue, let alone to take a pro-Bosnia position. (See my interview article, "German Student Activists Support Multiethnic Bosnia," N&L, 7/94.)

GERMANY: CRISIS IN THOUGHT, ACTIVITY

Nonetheless, the continued presence of dialectical thought in Germany offers at least the possibility of conceptualizing radically different human relations than those of the given society. New editions of Marx, especially the comprehensive *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe* (MEGA), continue to appear in German, and one can also find readily in bookstores works by Benjamin, Fromm, Adorno, Bloch, Lukacs, Horkheimer and Marcuse, albeit not so prominently as before. This is also seen in the decision of a leftist German publisher to bring out a German edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*.

Today, even the Habermasites have begun to lose some of their faith in bourgeois democracy as the large anti-racist movement has been unable to stem the tide of violence. The latest major outrage occurred May 12 in Magdeburg, a small, economically depressed city in the former East Germany, where unemployment is officially over 20%. On Ascension Day, a state holiday, a gang of up to 150 drunken fascists and skinheads beat up five African asylum seekers and then chased them through the streets of the center of town in broad daylight. In a country where police regularly issue tickets for stepping off the curb when the light is red, no police were to be found. Nor did any white German citizens intervene. Finally, the Africans found refuge in a Turkish-owned cafe. There, the fascists got some of their own medicine, as up to four of them were stabbed by Turkish immigrants who intervened on the side of the Africans.

Police later arrested 50 rightists, as fascist gangs continued to roam the streets beating up non-Europeans, but soon released all of them for "lack of evidence." When anti-racists marched the next day, police suddenly appeared in force to "prevent violence." This time they also brought their video cameras, something they conveniently forgot to bring when the fascists were on the rampage.

Ten weeks later, as three of the perpetrators were finally sentenced, Judge Evelyn Majstrak stated: "There reigned on that day not an anti-foreigner sentiment, that would be too mild a characterization. There reigned a warlike situation. Foreigners are in mortal terror." How, she asked, can foreigners receive "so little tolerance" in Magdeburg? (*Die Welt*, 7/23-24/94) Yet even in this seemingly forceful denunciation of racism, the word "foreigners [Ausländern]" stands out. Why could the judge not bring herself to use the term favored by multiculturalist activists—not "foreigners" but "immigrants" [Einwanderern]?

It is important, however, not to view a city like Magdeburg as uniformly racist and conservative. In the state of Saxony-Anhalt, of which Magdeburg is the capital, June 26 elections swept to power Germany's most leftist government, a minority Social Democrat-Green Party coalition which can govern only with the tacit support of the Party for Democratic Socialism (PDS), the former Communists. The Greens and the PDS each take very strong anti-racist stands and together won nearly 30% of the vote. Rightist Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who was silent about the Magdeburg riots, suddenly began mentioning Magdeburg in his speeches in order to attack the Social Democrats for forging a link with the PDS.

Kohl, whose tacitly racist and overtly anti-immigrant policies have gained him so much support, is now favored to win another term in elections this fall despite the terrible economic crisis. What is in store for labor if he wins is seen in the struggle at the post office. In June and July, thousands of postal workers staged strikes to protest Kohl's plans to divide up and privatize the German postal service, which combines mail and telephone services with a state bank. The 670,000 workers will face wage and benefit cuts plus layoffs if the new plan goes through. In a conversation two young women postal workers from Cologne expressed outrage not only over Kohl's privatization plan, but also over the retrogression in politics and in living standards since unification in 1990, which they said had come too quickly. "We are shocked by the racist, anti-immigrant atmosphere in Germany today and scared for the future of our country," they added.

All over Western Europe today, there is a sense that the future is ominous, that reactionary and retrogressive forces are gathering strength. This feeling was deepened after last spring's Italian elections brought a fascist party into the government for the first time anywhere in Europe since World War II. On the Left, there is both a loss of confidence and incredible confusion over how to respond to the developments since the fall of Communism. Yet just below the surface—among youth and workers, among Third World immigrants and women, among lesbian and gay activists and intellectuals—is a yearning for a non-racist, non-sexist, non-classist society, in other words, a human not a capitalist society.

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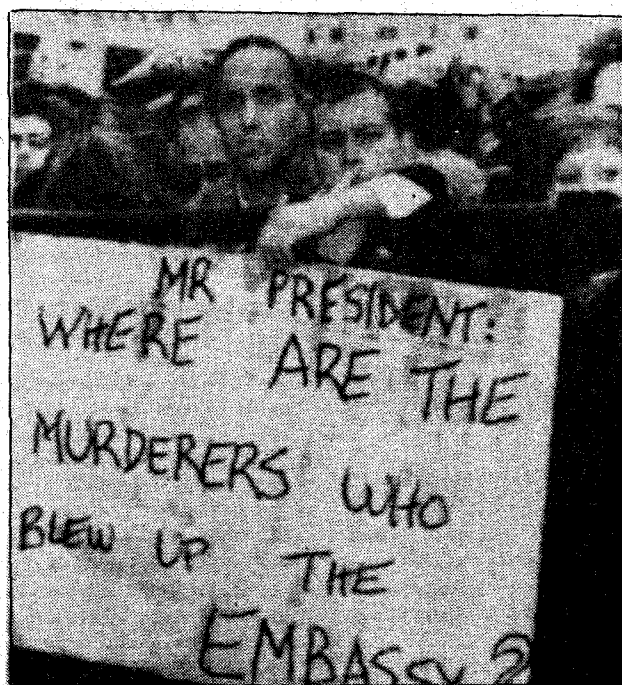
Eyewitness report: hope and horror in Argentina

Hope and horror converged during our stay in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Within a tense environment, on July 18, a car bomb exploded in a busy part of the city reducing to ruins a building that housed the social welfare and political organizations of Argentina's 300,000 Jews (the biggest Jewish community in Latin America) and the surrounding buildings. At least 38 people died, more than 200 were injured and many are still missing, making this the worst terrorist attack against a civilian population since World War II, after the neo-fascist bomb attack in the Bologna, Italy train station in 1980.

The responsibility for this racist, cowardly, irrational act—two years after a similar bomb exploded in the Israeli Embassy here killing 30 people—was assumed by the southern Lebanon-based Islamic group Ansar Allah, Partisans of God (a split of Hizbullah). There is an enormous possibility that a local rightist group gave support to it. Immediately after the attack Argentinian president Carlos Menem took advantage of the situation in order to create a Supersecretary of Security (SS), which centralized the domestic security, as well as to push the death penalty to be included in the country's new constitution. Not even in Stalin's Russia was there a concentration of power of this nature.

Three days after the brutal massacre, 200,000 people gathered in front of the Congress to claim justice and to protest the inaction on the part of the government to solve this crime.

One week before our arrival, on July 6, 50,000 workers from all over the country marched spontaneously into the historical Plaza de Mayo, in the Argentinian capital, to repudiate the economic policies of the current government as well as to protest the corruption of the political structure. (In the Buenos Aires City Council, eight kilos of cocaine were being sold weekly among the council members.) Some of the workers' columns marched about 1,850 miles—a distance equivalent to the one between Paris, France and Tripoli, Libya.



The Federal March, as it was called, was spontaneous and organized, but, of course, its meaning, if it is not taken in its totality, can run the risk of being taken over by a false opposition built on the hopes and struggles of the working class and the poor.

The government is refusing to address the economic, political and social problems affecting workers, despite recent social explosions in the northwest of the country and in the extreme south—Patagonia. Menem's government is ignoring the claims of the poor. The inhuman economic policies create a "stability" (with the lowest inflation rates recorded in the last decades) that is maintained at the cost of both a shocking recession and an economic polarization between the major cities and the countryside. In the northern province of Formosa, 93% of the population has its basic needs unsatisfied while in Buenos Aires, the capital, the percentage averages 5%.

At the same time, the government is mounting an offensive against women. The ruling party, the powerful and conservative Argentinian Catholic Church, and important sectors of the "opposition" want to include a clause in the National Constitution, which is currently being reformed, in which abortion is not only penalized, like it always was, but also its penalization would be extended to cases of rape and even to cases of danger to the mother's health.

All these reactionaries that promote a crusade against abortion in the name of the "right to life" are the same ones that closed their eyes, ears and mouths during the so-called "dirty war" in which 30,000 people disappeared. President Menem was also the one that pardoned the criminal military officers that planned the genocide in the name of the Western and Christian "civilization." His government allocates only 2.5% of the gross domestic product to health (less than in Haiti, Mozambique, Bolivia and Pakistan).

President Menem sent troops to the Persian Gulf War and is preparing others to send to Haiti in case of another U.S. invasion. He wants to be part of the so-called first world; however, the reality is that Argentina became another piece for the game being played by the powerful capitalist countries.

—Marina Azurduy and Carlos Varela

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OBJECTIVITY OF PHILOSOPHY IN TODAY'S REALITY

It's necessary to focus on the dual nature of reality. In South Africa a new nation is born with the essence of the old within it. In Palestine a similar development takes place. But the old holds on with a new face, laboring to railroad the people's struggles. Those at the bottom who voice their discontent with the system are finding few traditional allies. Their own voices are all they have, using it in unique and creative ways, but without a comprehension of the philosophical roots of their rebellion and ideas. Theorists like Dunayevskaya play significant roles here. What is lacking is mass knowledge of her work and the strength it can bring to those engaged in lower and deeper work. That is what I see your call to "take organizational responsibility for Marxist-Humanism" seeks to project forward.

D.A.
North Carolina

In the Draft for Perspectives in July N&L, the revolutionary organization of Marxist-Humanists is contrasted with the failure of post-Marx Marxists to "specify the objective role that a group of workers and intellectuals who are revolutionary theoreticians can play in helping to transform reality." Should "workers and intellectuals" have been written "workers-and-intellectuals" to emphasize that we mean workers are also theoreticians? Another question: When we work organizationally, whether we are participating in the freedom struggle, writing for the paper, working with the paper or developing theory, we are also practicing philosophy. Did the thesis make that perfectly clear? Or would some think that only the intellectual writing an essay is practicing philosophy?

S. Van Gelder
Detroit

Gene Ford was writing about important philosophic concepts in his Lead in the June N&L on the "Spirit of revolt beneath today's Black, Latino and labor reality," but it was mostly about reality—the reality of what it is to be a worker and Black and be living today. The paper needs more articles like that, that relate theory and reality.

Teenage revolutionary
San Francisco

South Africa, the country with the most dynamic revolutionary potential on the entire continent, must now face the raw fact that the struggle for freedom cannot be just a change of guards. It is perhaps the only country in the world where Stalinism is growing. It is not only in South Africa that the liberation struggle is facing a new stage. Nor is it even only a question of the genocide in Liberia or Rwanda.

Consider the rarely discussed struggle of the Black people in Mauritania. In Mali the Arab-Berbers are at war with the state to get the country divided into two so they can rule themselves, and in Algeria the Muslim fundamentalists are nearer to power than anywhere on the continent. There is very little chance for Tanzania to escape being divided in two

by the fundamentalists. And I can't remember how many times the so-called Marxists in Guinea-Bissau have cancelled general elections after involving the people in more than 14 years of struggle.

Some of the people I know are now part of the government in Senegal. They are Stalinist at heart and evidently needed to save their souls in this trying time. But they are disgraced by the day to day political struggle of the people of Senegal.

Ba-Karang
West Africa

You're right. The rulers need to prove their power to the world, and at the same time are constrained by economic weakness at home. But whether they argue for or against intervention in situations like those in Bosnia and Rwanda, the message is still that the masses are powerless to do anything. Everything is supposedly in the hands of the rulers and/or evil, immutable "human nature." So they hide the causes of genocide by reducing them to old ethnic or religious rivalries. Which is why your call for grassroots aid initiatives combined with dialogue on ideas of freedom is so important.

Computer analyst
Chicago

One thing I found striking in reading Jacques Derrida's new book *Les Spectres de Marx* is that he is worried that the talk about the "death of Marxism" is an effort to make "actually existing capitalism" more palatable. He writes, "In rereading the Communist Manifesto and several other important works of Marx, I told myself that I know few texts in the philosophic tradition, perhaps no other, whose message appears to be more urgent today...It would always be an error not to read and reread Marx."

Sociologist
Indiana

The Marxist-Humanist Draft Perspectives provides a very thought-provoking challenge and alternative understanding of our world crises showing that the simultaneous globalization and fragmentation of societies has a philosophic underpinning rooted in retrogression, and has a logic of its own. It is not a simple recombining of cultures.

I especially appreciated the connection made between China and the U.S. South: that these two distant cultures not only share features of authoritarian traditions and cheap labor, but most crucially they share the objectivity of the quest for the idea of freedom which comes from within and provides a way out of these contradictions. Today it is crucial for activists everywhere to have a philosophic perspective which guides them away from the pitfalls of sentimentalizing the past or ignoring the objectivity of today's realities.

Chinese American
Oakland

What the July 1994 issue brought home for me was that you never take anything for granted in the struggle for

Readers' Views

freedom. In "1964-the Summer that Never Ended" and "Stonewall 25" and in the critique of the "Swedish farce," the actual struggle for freedom both in reason and reality over a long period of time is what captures the dialectic as a defining moment.

The people that got off the freedom train 25 and 30 years ago have missed the dialectical development of the last decades and can never get that back. You're not at the home station until there is a revolution in permanence, reform ain't even close.

Jerry
Chicago

Sometimes when I think of the world situation, and try to process everything that's going on—I feel almost overwhelmed by it. I think about the 1992 L.A. Rebellion, and how nothing seems to have changed. But then I realize that we can't set an artificial time limit, as if revolution is like the production of a commodity.

New reader
Los Angeles

NEW JAPANESE TRANSLATION

We are undertaking a translation of *The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism* for Japan, where there are so many kinds of state-capitalist theories now it is like mushrooms after rain. All want to win the dispute so they can magnify their party. We are hoping to spread knowledge of Dunayevskaya's theory to get to the truth.

Intellectual
Hiroshima, Japan



WORKERS SPEAKING OUT

I work in the garment district of Manhattan. I haven't been paid in two weeks because the boss says he doesn't have the money. We are always being laid off when there is no work. Most of us make the minimum wage; those who iron make a little more. Wages are five to six dollars an hour. There are no benefits, no insurance. But it is better than Queens, where they pay less than the minimum wage.

Latino garment worker
New York City

Workers here need to export some help for Mexican workers to organize and get a chance at a better life. If we don't we'll wind up at their wages and conditions. We have to unite, especially on what they are trying to take away from us.

Black worker
Decatur, Ill.

GM and the UAW have really screwed their workers. Every year for the two or more weeks of model changeover we have received unemployment and sub-pay. The new contract this year makes changeover mandatory vacation time, instead. We pay our unions to represent us but they have become another capitalist buy-out. We need to take back our control. Why do we let someone else speak for us? If we could stand together like the people in the Paris Commune we would put capitalism under!

Lynn
Oklahoma

BART (rapid transit) workers dumbfounded the media and their union leaders by rejecting their contract offer. When I heard that one of the things they're demanding is fewer managers, it made me think about what is going on at Kaiser, the HMO where I work. They announced that all 3,200 managers have to reapply for their positions. A typical reaction was that there are too many managers anyway. Their presence is part of the lack of respect for workers who are concerned with giving patients quality care. Respect has to do with what ideas are deemed worthy. The middle managers whose jobs are now in jeopardy mouth the rhetoric of valuing each individual's ideas, but everything that

ends up in the blueprint for restructuring comes 100% from the top. They respect us so much, they respect us right out the door.

Htun Lin
Oakland

EFFECTIVE BORDER PATROL

September will mark one year of "Operation Hold the Line," an intensification of U.S. Border Patrol efforts to shut off immigration of Mexican unemployed between Juarez and El Paso. The U.S. House Appropriations Committee favors expansion of the program, evaluating results thus far as "extremely effective."

It is, in fact, so extremely effective that the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform has financed a University of Texas study into the obstruction to international commerce that is being imposed. Border enforcement congests traffic, inhibiting cargo transport opened by NAFTA. It has also rendered impossible the consolidation of Juarez and El Paso airports.

"There is clearly some irony," senses a writer for *The Economist*, "in trying to slow down human traffic while simultaneously attempting to expand commercial activity."

Tesla Coil
Normal, Ill.

FARE-JACKING

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board here in L.A. just jacked the fares from \$1.10 to \$1.35, eliminated monthly passes, and increased passes for students, seniors and disabled. The cost for the Blue Line train from Long Beach to L.A. more than doubled. The bureaucratic lice who feed off the sweat of the workers had four armed MTA cops in front of the rostrum during the meeting on this at City Hall. They acted as if they expected the audience to turn violent and then made everyone angrier by rudely chatting with each other all during the testimonies. It's one more example of why we have to take control of our own lives.

Retired auto worker
Whittier, Cal.



WHO READS N&L?

I've been passing around my copies of N&L and a few of the guys here are enthusiastic. Even one I always felt had a "capitalist" mentality said he was impressed with the writing in N&L. While I cannot call myself "Marxist" I find your ideas stimulating. I am not against Marxism, just haven't decided what I fully believe in. I do support many of the ideas and attitudes that come through in N&L. I'm sending some stamps to help pay for my sub.

Prisoner
Michigan

There is nothing in rural Georgia that provides me with the kind of information I get from N&L. Another great thing about N&L is that the subscription price is so LOW! Thanks for a great paper. I leave all my copies at a Youth Center here to help each issue go further.

Teacher
Georgia

At the National Federation of the Blind National Convention in Detroit this year, I found a steady interest in *News & Letters* and *Freedom Ideas International* (FII) on tape. I was not alone in my outrage that the National Library Service (NLS) refuses to carry either *News & Letters* or most of the numerous socialist and international Left periodicals represented in FII on tape or in Braille. Another person said "Cool!" when I told him that we do cover the gay and lesbian movements.

Good friend of N&L
Michigan

ARISTIDE: PHENOMENOLOGY AND 'REAL POLITIC'

Here is Jean-Bertrand Aristide "speaking for himself" at Stanford University:

There is a current in philosophy that pushes for the human will to be rational, logical and based in scientific analysis. The German philosopher Hegel adopted Phenomenology as the philosophical methodology, to examine events without pre-conception so as to discover the consonant structure of the consciousness....We should follow this objective line of thinking as we analyze the strategy to restore democracy to Haiti. We must be rational. We cannot say that red is blue because of the guns or the economic interests and lies that motivate the strategy of the gun. Our challenge is to demonstrate with the pen, through our strategy of non-violence, that red is red. We must reject irrational conclusions. This is not often easy. Those with the gun, the enemies of truth, have money to influence public opinion. But those of us who use the pen, dialogue and peaceful democratic

change as weapons have always had to search for solutions. In our search we must move to where the people of Haiti led us to search for this solution. It is those with no pens—because we have 85% illiteracy—who are the principal actors in the policy to restore democracy to Haiti. We have to respect their will. Respecting their will we can hear their message. And the message is for the world. Because it is a message rooted in democratic principles, urging politicians and policy makers to design policies based upon democratic principles and not economic interests. This is the real politic in Haiti. And this can be the real politic in the new world order. As we pursue the policy of the pen as our strategy to restore democracy to Haiti we must be true to the meaning of democracy. Democracy is the rule of the people, either directly or through their elected officials. Since when can a small minority dictate to the majority? We welcome a dialogue....

LIVING ARCHIVES: RESONATING WITH TODAY

There was a real resonance between Dunayevskaya's 50-year-old review of Myrdal's *American Dilemma* and the rest of the July issue especially the articles on Black labor in the South today which show that you have to keep working out a new relationship of class and race and that one does not "predominate" over the other. It was eye-opening to read the review in the context of News and Letters Committees Perspectives draft which discussed a "new sense of objectivity" in terms of economic changes in the South, as well as the Black-Red column on the NAACP convention which was a microcosm of Black tendencies whose concept of Black masses is that they need to be controlled so there will be no more L.A. Rebellions.

Librarian
Detroit

I read the Archives column in the June N&L—Dunayevskaya's critique of Mao on the ground of Hegel's Phenomenology—right after attending a very serious discussion on questions facing Iranian revolutionaries today. The opening talk was by an Iranian feminist, and much of the discussion revolved around questions of "leadership," and the relationship the masses have to religion.

Feminists are battling Islamic fundamentalists in many countries, but the traditional Left has focused on "materialism" versus what Hegel called "spiritual life," by which he meant the self-development of the Idea of Freedom. That narrowness from the Left contributed to the Iranian Revolution turning into its opposite, and cannot help the revolutionary forces inside Iran today who are trying to break through the regime's stranglehold. Dunayevskaya shows in her article that without the needed breakthrough in the field of ideas—even if you are a revolutionary, you will regress.

Cyrus Noveen
Los Angeles

In the May "From the Marxist-Humanist Archives" column which you called "The dialectics of labor and the labor of dialectics," it is striking how Dunayevskaya puts revolt at the center of capitalist development, even of tech-

nological development. Then the main enemy ends up being not the reformists but the impatience to get immediately to the absolute, which turns you away from the revolt that "shows an entirely new mode of life." Any "form" separated from that, she seems to be saying, ends up being appropriated by capitalism and turned against the workers.

F.B.
Chicago

The view presented by Raya Dunayevskaya (May N&L) that organizing unions was a compromise on the part of the workers is something that has been lost today. Unions reflect(ed) a stage of capitalist production, and mean that we agree to the capitalists stealing from us. So how can we go beyond what capitalist society represents, and make a break from capitalist production within workers' organizations? Dunayevskaya develops Marx's concept of the dual character of labor as a plague that affects workers themselves. It is a fetish that makes a worker half a thing and half a human being. We need to make a total break with that view of ourselves, if we are going to get to controlling production and running society.

Gene Ford
Los Angeles

HEALTH CARE IN CRISIS

My sister was recently laid off when the hospital supplies plant where she had worked for 25 years closed down. As part of her retirement plan, she has to pay for her own health insurance. She paid into that plan for 25 years and never used it; but recently she became ill and was in intense pain. When she went to the hospital for help—they treated her like a dog! They made her wait four hours before they gave her a shot to relieve her pain. There was no compassion—nothing! I couldn't stand it; I started to make a scene. And people say there's not a health care crisis in this country!

Chicana worker
Pomona, Cal.

Because I have health insurance I still have my right leg. Blue Cross and Blue Shield say the surgery I had is "investigational" but without it I would have lost my leg to midcalf. I keep thinking about what happens to people without insurance. Shouldn't every person be entitled to the same treatment I received? The rich don't have to worry but working class people only make enough to survive. Our whole lives revolve around money because capitalism is always looking for ways to get more from the source of all its wealth.

Working woman
Oklahoma

Management at Somerville Mills treats health and safety issues just like the police in Los Angeles. The L.A. police let O.J. Simpson beat his wife for all these years, and now suddenly they act like they think it's a horrible thing that she was killed.

Black woman garment worker
Tennessee



ISSUES FOR WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Nicole Simpson's story has not been forgotten as a media event but it has been forgotten as the story of a woman's life. By now the murder has been largely reduced to the strategies and tactics of one crack legal team versus another. Everything is deconstructed, reduced to bits and pieces of evidence. What is forgotten in all the National Enquirer sales, O.J. collectors cards, comic books, 800 numbers and 900 numbers for the O.J. joke-of-the-day is the death of an abused woman. And now the question of race has entered into the fray because of the perversity of the system we live under. Questions of race and sex and class are all factors naturally intertwined because they exist in real life and make up each of us. The problem develops when they are twisted around by the type of social system we live under.

Erica Rae
Illinois

Despite the 1992 reinstatement of Abortion Services at Cook County Hospital in Chicago, thousands of women still rely upon financial support from non-governmental organizations. This unmet need is caused by the low number of first trimester abortions performed weekly at Cook County Hospital (about 30), leaving a massive number of low-income women unable to access abortion services. They turn to the only source of abortion funding in Illinois, the Chicago Abortion Fund (CAF). CAF assists low-income women in their second trimester with information, referral and direct financial assistance for abortions.

The need for funded abortions in Illinois is not being met. Your readers can help to make a difference by sending 1) a message to Congress that health care reform must include a full range of reproductive options, including abortion or it will be discriminatory towards women; 2) a donation to the Chicago Abortion Fund (P.O. Box 578307, Chicago, IL 60657) to help a woman exercise her constitutional right to choose a safe and legal abortion.

NARAL activist
Illinois

In most shops where the majority are women you find they are treated badly. With the boss at Howe Sipes baseball apparel company, it's not a Black or white thing—he has the white women in tears too. Some don't recognize it, but most women know we got the power and we know what direction to put it in.

Black woman labor organizer
Memphis

HOMELESS IN NEW YORK

We didn't get any sleep last night because the police came and threw all the homeless people out of Central Park. There is nowhere we can sleep in peace. Last winter when it was so cold, we were sleeping on the subway. The police waited for the trains at the end of the line and arrested everyone. It was four degrees out and I only had a thin jacket. I think the police get paid according to how many people they arrest.

Unemployed couple
New York

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS

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A full list of publications (many publications are not listed here) available from News and Letters Committees
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BOOKS

BY RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

- ☐ Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until today
1988 edition. New author's introduction. \$17.50
- ☐ Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao
1989 edition. New author's introduction. \$14.95
- ☐ Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution
1991 edition. New author's introduction. Foreword by Adrienne Rich. \$12.95
- ☐ Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Liberation: Reaching for the Future \$15.95
- ☐ The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: Selected writings by Raya Dunayevskaya \$8.50
- ☐ The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya
Contains "Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987," and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes."
..... \$3 paperback, \$10 hardcover
- BY CHARLES DENBY
- ☐ Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal
1989 edition includes Afterword by Raya Dunayevskaya \$14.95

PAMPHLETS

- ☐ American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard Statement of the National Editorial Board. Includes "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa" by Raya Dunayevskaya, and "Black Caucuses in the Unions" by Charles Denby \$2
- ☐ Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western "Civilization" \$1
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Black/Red View

by John Alan

The current multicultural, racially diverse concept of the American Civilization presents itself as an original revelation of a long hidden dimension of the American Civilization. Only now, at this point in American history, do people dare to say openly that the United States is NOT a homogeneous country, "one nation indivisible," as it claims to be. This is neither new nor original. Nor does it reflect the historic reality.

The bringing of generations of dispossessed European workers, of many different cultures, and Black slaves from Africa, with non-European cultures, to America to work on the expropriated lands of native Americans and in mills and factories was one of the greatest intermingling of cultures that the world has ever experienced. It was a terrible, inhuman process, but this conjunction of human labor and various cultures created a unique American culture, literally breaking away from the European culture of their masters.

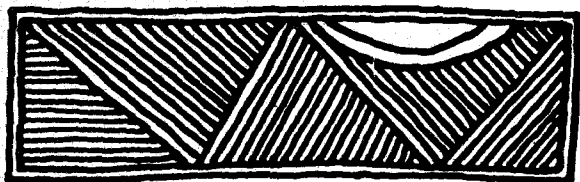
HEGEL AND FANON ON CULTURE

Recognizing that the United States is not various cultures indifferently connected with each other in no way means that the American culture is not a self-estranged culture, like every other culture in the world today. This ignores culture as a process of self-estrangement that Hegel called a stage when the spirit "...breaks up into two regions. The one is the actual world, the other is that which the spirit constructs for itself in the ether of pure consciousness, raising itself above the first. This second world, being constructed in opposition and contrast to that estrangement, is just on that account not free from it; on the contrary, it is only the other form of that very estrangement, which consists precisely in having a conscious existence in two sorts of worlds, and embraces both. Hence it is not self-consciousness of Absolute Being in and for itself..."

Hegel revealed the major flaw in all movements seeking to find in the realm of culture a pathway to freedom. At the same time, Hegel sought to transcend alienation in culture and in actuality.

Frantz Fanon saw transcending the opposition between existing culture and life as a crucial issue. In his analysis of the state of culture in Africa, at the time of the 1960s anti-colonial revolutions, two things were apparent to Fanon. One, the African middle classes and intellectuals had long embraced European culture as their own. And two, the poor peasantry, after two centuries of occupation, possessed only the symbolic remembrance of their former culture. In Fanon's words: "The withering away of the reality of the nation and the death-pangs of the national culture are linked to each other in mutual dependence."

Fanon saw a solution in the struggle for freedom



Gambia coup tests Left

by Ba Karang

On July 22 the military took over state power of the Gambian government at a time when the country was witnessing political unrest in certain parts of the country. July 30 would mark the 13th year of the bloody 1981 attempted military coup which was crushed by the brutal intervening Senegalese military forces.

The July 22 coup in Gambia came as a surprise because of the presence of the almost 100 Nigerian military forces in the country and a visit by the U.S. Marines a day before the military takeover. U.S. Marines were in fact still in Gambian waters.

The uncompromising way President Jawara was handling the contradictions in the military might have made him think that he was in control of the military forces. He must be disappointed by the still silent Nigerian forces present in the country on whom he was highly dependent after he decided to dissolve the Senegambian Confederation and sent the Senegalese military forces out of the country.

The young military officers who took over power recently announced that they will hand over the government to civilians in the very near future. But we must not be taken by surprise if they don't.

The Gambian military force consists of youths who never made it in the job market and took up the only available job in the country and that is the military. These young military officers had been radicalized by the hard economic and political situation in the country long before they did make up their minds to join the military. And the fact that the most politically minded youths took over the leadership of the coup was not surprising.

But no matter how radical these youths are they are not likely to change the situation in the country. They have no political programs for the country. Without a doubt a great part of the Gambian Left will condemn the coup and will distance themselves. A possible left alliance to join the military is possible and this will be the Left that has never learned its lesson. The experience of Ghana and Liberia should be a guiding principle. What will happen in the coming days, with or without a military intervention, will be the greatest test of the Gambian Left.

Can multiculturalism transcend alienation?

which is, in itself, the creation of a new culture, along different paths and tracing out entirely new cultural development.

This relationship between revolution and culture is the dividing line between Fanon and today's multiculturalism. Fanon wasn't opposed to culture per se, but saw existing and historical cultures as processes

Rwanda, Haiti apocalypse

(Continued from page 1)

suffering Haiti, Clinton knows that American public opinion is fed at two troughs. Polls show that most white Americans want nothing to do with Haiti's problems, neither its refugees nor its political turmoil.

On the other hand, African-American political opinion has been stoked by a Black national leadership in support of U.S. military intervention. In large part, Black political opinion has been in response to the racist refugee policy of the Bush and Clinton administrations. However, a U.S. invasion of Haiti is no less racist, inasmuch as it is Clinton's way of enforcing a racist refugee and immigration policy by other means.

AFRICA'S 'HEART OF DARKNESS'

But if U.S. policy on Haiti represents a new version of the "White Man's Burden," Rwanda is the West's new "heart of darkness." The world's attention has been riveted to the unfolding genocide and refugee catastrophe in Rwanda since April. Although the statistics are staggering, and the graphic media images overwhelming of mounds of hacked bodies in Rwanda and cholera-plagued bodies being bulldozed in Goma, Zaire, their relationship to the political designs of Western powers must never be lost sight of, especially France's expanding role in Africa.

The genocidal agenda of Rwanda's political and military leaders is clear. As Donathe Ntegeyiminise, who left the Goma camps to return to his northern Rwandan town of Ruhengeri said, "We were deceived. In Goma the peasants suffer alone while the former administrators who forced us to go there are in hotels, driving cars and drinking wine."

Nevertheless, all the machinations of the despotic rulers in Rwanda and Haiti do not sufficiently explain the carnage of civil society. The civilian militias which have unleashed campaigns of terror in both countries are the creation of the ideological manipulation of political elites. In Haiti, the paramilitary front FRAPH (Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti) is the military's instrument against the liberation theology base communities, peasant organizations and trade union groups. The Habyarimana regime armed and directed its own civilian militias in its genocide against the Tutsi minority and the regime's Hutu political opponents.

Thus, it was not alone the ethnic character of the genocide in Rwanda, as the Western media continues to report, but the emergent informal associations, especially in the rural areas, who began to declare their independence from the state, that the government sought to crush. And these arose in Rwanda, as in Haiti and virtually every Third World country, in response to the structural adjustment programs of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

This is why the Left's slogan calling for the "restoration of democracy," and its preoccupation with the supposed virtues of civil society, is woefully misplaced. Democracy and civil society comes to nothing but social catastrophe without the revolutionary uprooting of the state machine and expropriation of the bourgeoisie. Revolution too is no less the answer to the daily savageries of "American civilization" which increasingly sees the mirror image of itself in the twin apocalypse of Rwanda and Haiti.

—August 4, 1994

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

dale, editor of the Jackson Advocate, calls "a Machiavellian attempt to control and channel all independent social movements" in Mississippi today.

Far from this confirming the Left's threadbare notion of "American exceptionalism," that is, that revolution is impossible in the U.S., the new reality of the South demands theoretical examination of its social and historical development. This so-called "most underdeveloped" region of the American capitalist economy may show to the more developed the image of its own future.

That is certainly true regarding the new Black, labor and women's struggles I encountered on my trip to Memphis recently. Although Memphis is very different from Mississippi, my experience with Black women workers is not unlike what is occurring in Mississippi and throughout the South.

For example, at a Fayette County garment plant in Somerville, Tenn. Black women workers are fighting against enormous odds to get a contract. They are now in their 53rd negotiating session with the plant management. Not only are they fighting against horrendous working conditions, but they are struggling with the contradictions among their own co-workers.

In the words of one militant woman faced with these contradictions:

"The company fears the strength of the workers in Local 282, because we've had members of the local come from all around to work our campaign. They have supported us from day one, and the company is afraid of

of alienation and permanent duality. He vigorously opposed Leopold Senghor's concept of "Negritude," a philosophy of neo-colonial culture founded upon the concept of an European-African duality. This double consciousness of "spirit" living in two worlds, the world of thought and the objective world, is unable to realize itself in the objective world. Thus the spirit (mind) remains an alien in its own culture.

A NEW STAGE OF EXISTENCE?

Multiculturalism is in a similar predicament. While it is conscious of the opposition between culture and reality, it does not seek to annul the objectivity of its self-alienation. Instead, it attempts to give a validity to multiculturalism without finding a universal reason for its validity in concrete actuality. For example, Afrocentrism when it gains state power fuses together alienation of high technology with self-alienated cultural ideas and practices created by societies that no longer exist as viable social entities today. They use the old culture to discipline the masses and to control opposition to the class in power.

Culture is not an absolute, i.e., an unmediated phenomenon without change or development. The word multiculturalism is bandied around as a tag of identity rather than Hegel's concept of culture as a totality which "embraces all the means of self-development," "ideas" as well as material factors such as "wealth."

Hegel concentrated on the dialectics of the process of self-alienation within culture. Today's global capitalism obviously transforms cultures into commodities. Multiculturalism, in all of its ambiguous and sometime reactionary forms, is a manifestation of the crisis of world capitalism. Can there be a new beginning in culture which would transcend its duality? Hegel apparently believed so, if the recollection of "self-consciousness of vanished existence" provides the knowledge for "the new stage of existence, a new world" and a new mind.

Workers battle K-Mart

Greensboro, N.C.—In the years following the explosion and deaths at the Imperial Food Products chicken processing plant in Hamlet, North Carolina, there has been a steady flow of activity related to workers' rights and organizing here. Workers in various industries have raised issues about their conditions of work and quality of life. And Black workers have been in the forefront of many of these efforts for self-definition and democracy.

For the past year, workers from a new K-Mart warehouse have struggled for better working conditions, pay and leave policies. Many of these workers are Black; all are lowly paid. And the company has stonewalled all attempts to improve these conditions. In July 1993, the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (ACTWU) began an organizing drive at the Greensboro K-Mart distribution center. Two months later the vote was held, and the union vote won out.

Since the vote, K-Mart has refused to negotiate a contract. Union organizers on the job have been harassed. And the struggle took a public turn this spring when people supported the workers' cause by stopping play at the K-Mart-Greater Greensboro Open golf tournament. Joining hands, dozens of people were arrested in an act of nonviolent protest.

The sacrifices these workers have made and continue to make help all workers. But their actions make a significant contribution to the continuing Black freedom struggle. This is helping to expose who are the real friends of the people, as well as give the masses experience in carrying out the struggle at the workplace so that they can gain the necessary knowledge as they take up the mantle of the new leaders of the people's movement.

—D.A.

that type of strength and support.

"However, it bothers me when I work with a lot of women. I feel that women are pessimistic and it's just so many things they can do with their lives. It bothers me deeply when I see that they are trapped by a company that has no future for them. It's like they're living in fear and they're not even using their heads. That company has only been there 10 years, and these women are in their 30s and 40s. They were making it before the company was here, so....Most of the time I guess everybody thinks I'm living in my own world at work because I'm trying to figure these things out." (See the articles from Somerville Mills workers in the July News & Letters, as well as on page 3 in this issue.)

She also spoke about the various ways the company tries to divide workers, such as telling immigrant workers not to speak in English to union organizers nor to any other worker. And almost every worker I spoke with never failed to mention the plantation mentality that they are fighting against.

At another plant, Howe Sipes, which makes baseball apparel, I talked with several Black women workers during their half-hour lunch break. In their fight against the barbarism of the plant management and the production method of going from speedup to having no work at all, the women at Sipes are very conscious of who they are as working women. When asked do they think that they are treated the way they are because they are women, their response was, "No, it's because we are Black women."

Clearly, there is a new "state of mind" emerging in the South, one which will not develop, however, without at one and the same time overcoming the limits of the given reality as well as its own inner contradictions.

Essay Article

by Eugene Walker

I.

Nineteen ninety-four is the 100th anniversary of the birth of the great Peruvian Marxist Jose Carlos Mariátegui, whose *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality* remains, more than 60 years after its initial appearance, one of the major writings of Latin American social thought. As well, 1994 is the 150th anniversary of Marx's *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844, which signaled the birth of Marx's new humanism, historical materialism. The conjunction of these two anniversaries is in turn given rich new meaning by their appearance in the year of the Chiapas rebellion. Let us briefly explore the interminglings of these revolutionary moments, not in the accidental sense of an anniversary, but rather in asking whether the ideas of these two social thinkers can speak to, and help give direction to, the new beginnings taking place on the Latin American continent in the 1990s.



José Carlos Mariátegui

It becomes important to explore the relationship of Mariátegui and Marx at this moment when so many are claiming that Marxism has been eclipsed globally, including in Latin America. The ground for such a claim lies in the false amalgam that has been made between the collapse of totalitarian Communist state-capitalist regimes and the Marxism of Marx. An exploration of original sources will show how absolutely opposite are the ideas of Marx to the practice of those who claimed to be his followers in state power. Mariátegui's ideas too have been claimed by those whose practice is worlds apart from his revolutionary vision.

The need to examine the ideas and interrelationship of Mariátegui and Marx does not originate from a desire to "clear the historic record." Instead, the compulsion comes from today's reality, both the terrain of unfreedom that characterizes so much of Latin America and the continuous striving for new beginnings as seen in the Chiapas rebellion. In the 1990s, a philosophy of human liberation, one that can help these revolutionary new beginnings come to fruition, is crucial. We want to ask if the writings of Marx and Mariátegui might help to create such a liberatory vision.

II.

Though Marx's writings on what we call the Third World—particularly the "Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations" from his *Grundrisse* and his writings of 1873-1883 on the Russian peasant commune and his *Ethnological Notebooks*—show how much Marx thought about and wrote on noncapitalist lands,¹ we want to concentrate on what Raya Dunayevskaya identified as the birth of historical materialism, his "new continent of thought and revolution," the *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844.² This is because the relationship of Marx and Mariátegui genuinely begins with these writings. For it is here where Marx's discovery of a new Subject of revolution, the proletariat, would illuminate his thought for the next four decades. In the early part of the next century Mariátegui would seek out and work with a new revolutionary subject on Latin American soil.

The three central manuscripts of 1844 were "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," "Alienated Labor" and "Private Property and Communism." These essays were the birth of Marx's concept of human liberation, an integrality of economics and philosophy, a "new Humanism."

With "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," Marx, at one and the same time, critiqued Hegel for the dehumanization of philosophy and singled out the greatness of Hegel's dialectic, the "negation of the negation" as the moving and creating principle. Marx's theoretical labors allowed him to appropriate the Hegelian dialectic for a new historic moment—one in which proletarian impulses reached for the skies. It was Marx's appropriation of the dialectic of negativity right within this essay which led Marx to formulate his new world view in its most compelling form: "We see here how thorough-going Naturalism, or Humanism, distinguishes itself both from Idealism and Materialism, and is, at the same time, the truth uniting both. We see, at the same time, how only Naturalism is capable of grasping the act of world

history." With the emergence of the proletariat came the human bearer of Marx's idea of freedom, his "thorough-going Naturalism or Humanism."

Marx's new world view would brook no separation between philosophy and economics. In "Alienated Labor" Marx centered his inquiry on the lot of the worker in the production process: "The worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces...the worker becomes an ever cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates...labor produces not only commodities: it produces itself and the worker as a commodity..." He critiqued political economy for its blindness to this linchpin of capitalist production: "Political economy conceals the estrangement inherent in the nature of labor by not considering the direct relationship between the worker (labor) and production."

Marx traced how man has become alienated from nature, from himself, from his species existence and from other men. He hit out against a labor process in which the "worker's own physical and mental energy, his personal life—for what is life but activity?—is an activity which is turned against him, independent of him and not belonging to him."

In "Alienated Labor" Marx expressed the direct relationship between alienated labor and private property: "Private Property is thus the product, the result, the necessary consequence, of alienated labor, of the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself...when one speaks of private property, one thinks of dealing with something external to man. When one speaks of labor, one is directly dealing with man himself. This new formulation of the question already contains its solution."

In his essay "Private Property and Communism" Marx continued his discussion of labor and property, but here his critique was directed not so much at classical political economy as at "vulgar communism":

"Regarding private property in its universality, communism appears in its form only as its generalization and completion...Since it completely negates the personality of man, this type of communism is only the logical expression of private property...insofar as it has not yet grasped the positive essence of private property and to the same degree has little understood the human nature of needs, communism still remains under the influence of private property."

Marx ended this essay by showing that even when communism's positive affirmation was the actual moment needed for the immediate historical development it did not represent a new society: "Communism is the necessary form and the energizing principle of the immediate future. But communism, as such, is not the goal of human development, the form of human society."

There is no more compelling moment in Marx's life than his reworking the Hegelian dialectic with the revolutionary subjectivity of a new human bearer, the proletariat. In 1844, Marx seized upon Hegel's concept of *transcendence* as objective movement and re-created the dialectic in so revolutionary a manner that it allowed for the fullness of his critique of classical political economy, of vulgar communism, of Hegel himself. Now he could truly coalesce with a revolutionary new Subjectivity, the proletariat, and discern double negation as pathway to the future: "Only by the transcendence of this mediation, which is nevertheless a necessary presupposition, does there arise positive Humanism, beginning from itself."

Three-quarters of a century after the young Marx had penned his 1844 Manuscripts, and without ever knowing of their existence, the young Jose Carlos Mariátegui began writing of the Peruvian Indians as a revolutionary subject within Peru's communal, "feudal" and capitalist modes of production. Mariátegui began to hew out new paths to revolution on the Latin American continent. Herein lies the intertwining of Mariátegui and Marx.

III.

The strands of Jose Carlos Mariátegui's development are multidimensional. They encompass a discovery and first working out of socialist ideas at the time that the Peruvian working class was discovering itself as a class, engaging in strike activities which culminated in a successful workers' general strike for the eight-hour day in 1918-1919. We find Mariátegui witness to and participant in a student activism which developed a relation to Lima's working class in 1919. Mariátegui's brief period abroad (1919-1923) was in a Europe reeling under the impact of the Russian Revolution. In Italy he found rich discussion and concrete activities of revolutionary change. He returned to Peru, bringing this international dimension of Marxist thought and activity. This became fused with what he came to recognize as the concrete specificity of Peruvian reality and its Indian path toward socialist revolution. By the second half of the 1920s he had developed a Marxist perspective that was at one and the same time national and international, a dialectic of race and class in Peru.

Here we want to concentrate on the dimension of Mariátegui's thought which brings him closest to our age and connects him to Marx. This centers upon Mariátegui's discovery of a revolutionary Subject within Peru's reality, the indigenous peoples, and on his determination to link that Subject to the creation of socialism: "Socialism orders and defines the just demands of the working class. And in Peru the working class are four-fifths part Indian. Our socialism then would not be Peruvian—it would not even be socialism—if it did not first consolidate itself with indigenous demands."³

In putting forth the concept of the revolutionary subjectivity of indigenous peoples in Peru, Mariátegui, like

Marx, had to break with the established radical thought of his day. Particularly he had to break with those radicals who wanted merely to apply Marxism to Latin America, concentrating on the working class in the cities and dismissing the question of the indigenous dimension as only peripheral to the class question. Mariátegui broke with this kind of thinking and strove to work out the relation of class and race, worker and peasant.

In reaching out to the Indian Mariátegui refused to make a sharp separation between the Indian as peasant and the Indian as worker. He recognized that the Indians who were miners were in fact primarily peasants who became indebted to merchants and thus obligated to work off the debt in the mines. "The Indigenous of the mines, for a large part continue to be peasants, such that the adherent who is won among them is also an element won in the peasant class."



Chiapas, Mexico

At the same time Mariátegui recognized that once the Indian was forced to become a worker he could gain a new dimension of revolutionary consciousness: The mining centers are "important proletarian concentrations" which "bring the Indigenous laborers together with industrial workers, with workers coming from the cities, who bring to these centers their class (conscious) spirit and principles." Thus for Mariátegui, there could not be a wall between worker and peasant within Peru; often they were one and the same.

In turn, this objective intertwining of worker and peasant helped Mariátegui formulate his view of a worker-peasant alliance, which he took a number of steps to organize:

- 1) He proposed a new form of newspaper, one specifically devoted to the problem of the peasant, to be named *El Ayllu*.
- 2) He proposed a specific form of struggle—a veritable civil war against *gamonalismo* (the phenomena of parasitic landlords who entrapped the peasant)—which he began by publishing within the pages of his magazine *Amauta* a special journal, *Proceso del gamonalismo—Boletín de defensa Indígena*.
- 3) He analyzed the specific labor process, the various forms of enforced work which the peasant masses were subjected to, and contrasted these to the surviving communal Indian systems of agriculture.
- 4) He and members of his organization began an organizing project among miners in the late 1920s.
- 5) He proposed that Indians who had become proletarianized would be the ones who could best return to organize in indigenous centers.
- 6) Mariátegui recognized the racism that had to be confronted if any worker-peasant alliance was to be built: "The peasant Indians will not really understand except from individuals from their bosom who speak to them their own language. They will always mistrust the white, the *mestizo*."

Just as Mariátegui had not seen a sharp separation between worker and peasant in Peru, he did not view the Indian question as one that could be thought of only as a class question or only as an oppressed nation. The key for him was the interrelationship between race and class within Peruvian reality. The Indian was class—worker/peasant—and race—not white nor *mestizo*—at one and the same time. Mariátegui insisted that because the Indian was both race and class, both worker and peasant, he could not be compartmentalized off into any one category, whether that be his own separate state as an oppressed race, or be considered as a worker without a consciousness of race.

In working out the complexity of relations between socialism and *indigenismo*, Mariátegui was able to recreate Marxism for a Peruvian reality, rather than simply apply Marxism to the Latin American continent.

IV.

The kind of questions which Mariátegui raised have reappeared again and again in Latin America, particularly where the Indian is either a majority or a large minority. Today the question has been posed in a dramatic new way in the Chiapas rebellion in Mexico.

We need to stress the newness of Chiapas. This is not because certain aspects of the kind of "feudal-like" relations Mariátegui described for Peru in the 1920s cannot be seen in Chiapas in the 1990s. They can. Nor is it merely the need for "modernization." Rather, the resonance with Mariátegui's time, or for that matter with Marx's description of so-called primitive accumulation, is that these economic forms are not only vestiges of the past embedded in the reality of the late 20th-century capitalism in many areas of Latin America, including Mexico. It is the development of underdevelopment.

It is also true that the rebellion in Chiapas can be viewed as a continuation of the Mexican revolution of 1910-17. There is a resonance with Zapata, the struggle for land and the preservation of the communal land, the *ejido*, that was so central to that revolution.

But Chiapas is not so much a continuation of an early 20th-century revolution as it is the stirring of revolutionary new beginnings at the edge of the 21st century. Two events of the 1990s—the abrogation of Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution on the right to land, the signing of a Free Trade Agreement with the U.S. and Canada—were major catalysts for the rebellion.

(Continued on page 10)

1. For Marx's writings of his last decade see especially his letter to the editorial board of *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, November 1877 (his reply to N.K. Mikhailovsky, a theoretician of Narodism, Russian populism; his draft letters to the Russian revolutionary, Vera Zasulich, in late February and March, 1881; Marx and Engels' preface to the Russian edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, January 21, 1882 and his *Ethnological Notebooks* of 1880-82. These notebooks discussed Iroquois society in America. Another as yet unpublished section of those notebooks took up Inca society.

See also my chapter on "Marx and the Non-Capitalist World" in Jose Carlos Mariátegui and Karl Marx: *Paths to Revolution in the Third World*, California State University, Los Angeles, 1984. This work is published in Spanish as *Mariátegui y Marx: La Transformación Social En Los Países En Vía De Desarrollo*, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México City, 1994.

2. See Dunayevskaya's commentary on the *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* in her *Marxism and Freedom*, 1958 and *Philosophy and Revolution*, 1973.

3. Mariátegui's writings quoted in this essay can be found in *Amauta*, the magazine he founded. Lima, Peru, 1926-1930.

Inside look at disastrous truth of Russia's 'economic miracle'

There have recently been articles in the American press saying that, despite all the hardships, privatization has begun in Russia and a middle class has begun to appear. The general impression given the reader has been very positive. Let me tell you what the Moscow Institute of Consumers' Research found when they investigated the actual situation of grassroots Russian consumers. These results were not advertised in Russian newspapers, but only in special publications.

First, we must note that in the U.S. you measure the conditions of people by a "poverty line." In Russia there is a different level by which to measure. It's the physical survival line. According to the findings of the Research Institute, 15 million people now live below the physical survival level in Russia. That means they are in absolute poverty, not relative but absolute poverty.

The data published shows that 90% of the population spend 80% of their incomes on food. A second category—engineers, professionals—who make up 6% of the population spend 50% to 60% of their salaries for food. And in the 4% of the population at the very top, even in this category, 20% to 30% of income is spent for food. The increased price for food is so dramatic that basic food is unavailable for many people. For the past five months the price of bread increased nine times, beef 10 times, sausage and milk 12 times, onions and cabbage 16 times. The production of food has declined so much it is not on the level of 1955. Only the production of liquor has increased.

There are still no tools in Russia to raise production of any kind. The entrepreneurs who might be interested in

production find it more profitable to speculate with foreign-made products than to increase production at home. The political and economic situation is so unstable that no one will invest money in the production sector.

Those who believed in market miracles thought that when people started to compete with each other production would increase. But it turned out that all we got was a "speculative industry." All industry—including state industry—has now been pushed to the level of 1965. The decline is not just in the production of basic commodities but of Russian technology. In the coal industry the economy is at the level of the mid-1950s.

The coal miners are against selling the mines into private hands, but they also hate state ownership. Some of the leaders from the strike committees have become middle-men—almost petty entrepreneurs themselves—in joint ventures they have initiated between German enterprises and their own comrades, the Russian miners.

The military industrial complex is still a big industry and 70% is not dismantled yet. To do so it means to kick people out. The present government cannot afford to do

that. This is the hope of the Russian nationalists because everyone from the chief managers to the workers demands that the industry be kept from collapsing. Nobody knows how to solve the issue.

The death rate is now exceeding the birth rate in Russia. It is called "minus birth rate." There are several reasons for it. Economically, women don't have any means to support their families and don't want to have children for that reason. Psychologically, the change from a past reality to the newer horrible reality was so drastic many say they don't want to bring children into this kind of world.

At the same time, the rate of suicides is very high. It is high among old people who belonged to the bureaucracy and can't find a place in the new reality. But it is also high among young people who cannot find work. It is estimated that within two years 25% of the population that can work won't be able to find work. Already so many cannot support their families with the minimal salaries they now make that it has become an unbearable situation for them.

All this is what the "economic miracle" of "market reform" has brought Russia so far. —Nikolai Zelinski

Haitian peasant leader opposes intervention

Editor's note: Chavanne Jean Baptiste is the founder and leader of the Peasant Movement of Papay, and the national peasant movement of the Papay congress. With over 100,000 members, this is Haiti's largest and most powerful peasant organization. Jean Baptiste is a close adviser to President Aristide, having served on Aristide's presidential commission and participated in the Governor's Island negotiations. He was interviewed by Cyrus Noveen on July 19.

It is a pleasure for me to be speaking to people who are trying to understand and help the Haitian people in struggle. Since the beginning of the coup we could see that the Haitian people have maintained a very strong resistance to the coup and this is what explains the increased repression.

The Peasant Movement of Papay (MPP) was the most targeted organization in the country after the coup d'état. That is why in the very first days of the coup there were orders given to the military to try to totally dismantle the MPP. That is why today we have many leaders who if they are not in hiding they are in prison or out of the country. Two months after the coup we were able to identify 200 of the leaders of MPP that were in prison and about 5,000 or more that were forced into hiding. In spite of this, however, the resistance has taken other forms. There are other means of communica-

tion and different organizations are able to communicate with each other. The MPP continues to struggle.

Today (July 19) there is a big debate among us concerning the reinforcement of the police force that was part of the Governor's Island Accord. The two other points of debate are: 1) How to restore the president to power? Will it be by way of a U.S. or multilateral intervention, or by other means? And 2) there is also a big debate on the question of when Aristide is restored, what kind of program could be implemented so that the country could be put on the track of survival?

My personal position and the position of MPP is that we are against all forms of military intervention in Haiti. And we believe that if the international community really wants to help the cause of democracy in Haiti it does not need an intervention to do so. We call upon them to give strict orders to Raul Cedras and Michel Francois to leave the political scene. Once they receive this strict and unequivocal order they will do so. We are calling for this and the implementation of the Governor's Island Accord.

We think that the only chance for the restoration of democracy in Haiti is for President Aristide to be restored and for the Lavallais movement (The Flood—the multi-dimensional movement that brought Aristide to power) to be able to develop so that justice and peace could be restored to the country.

Essay Article

(Continued from page 9)

The newness of Chiapas lies within the historic moment in which it has occurred. A number of Latin American intellectuals have recognized one aspect of its newness as being a post-Communist rebellion, that is, after the collapse of the state-capitalist regimes of the East and while there is a deep isolation of Cuba. From neither Mexico nor the U.S. can it be claimed that Moscow or Havana is behind this rebellion.

But a number of intellectuals wish to impose their own ideological manacles upon Chiapas. To them post-Communist means post-revolutionary. For them revolution, either as idea or action, is not in view. Instead of a social uprooting, they wish to discuss "democracy, justice and peace," but all within the existing society. They may recognize the indigenous dimension of this rebellion—how could they avoid it—but want the context of struggle to be inclusion within "civil society" rather than the struggle against a class society with its racism and sexism.

The indigenous rebels who took up arms and made demands in Chiapas have posed a much deeper challenge. The rebellion in Chiapas compels us to rethink the future, to work out a new social consciousness. To do so we need to turn once again to Marx and Mariategui, not as past, but as a needed prologue in Latin America's reaching for the future.

V.

The objective reality Marx faced from the 1840s to the 1880s was worlds away from the Peru of the 1920s in which Mariategui was active. What united them as revolutionaries through these differing historical moments was their search for pathways to overthrow the ruling societies they lived under. Marx, both in his *Grundrisse* of the late 1850s and in writings of his last decade, expressed the development of societies from communal to capitalism as being a multilinear, not unilinear, one. This multilinear view involved not only an investigation of pre-capitalist economic formations per se, but was also a search for new paths to revolution that would encompass non-capitalist areas as well as technologically developed countries. Whether his search took up the Russian peasant commune, the mir, or the studies by anthropologists of New and Old World societies, for Marx the determining feature was the paths to revolution that were being opened. His last writings were a concretization of the "new continent of thought and revolution" he had begun in 1844.

Mariategui's revolutionary journey of a dozen years led to his creative labor with the Indian peasant dimension. When Mariategui's singular contribution of discerning the inseparability of socialism and indigenismo as the truth of Peru's reality is juxtaposed to Marx's Humanism, his view of the human dimension in non-capitalist lands, then the oneness, not of content, and not always of methodology, but of revolutionary spirit, of a search for revolutionary subjects, of a concrete seeking of paths to revolution, comes to the fore.

Each of their views of reality had as goal the transformation of that reality. Marx's view of community in the Russian mir and Mariategui's view of community in the sierra Indian village were not a look backward, or simply an outcry against the very real destruction of these indigenous forms. Rather for both Marx and Mariategui, the vision was one of trying to discern a path toward the future, a future where "human power is its own end." From the vantage point of Chiapas, a path toward the future may well lay within the revolutionary thought of Marx and Mariategui.

Bosnia's indictment of the West and the Left

by Sheila Fuller

Why Bosnia: Writings on the Balkan War, ed. Rabia Ali and Lawrence Lifschultz. Stony Creek, CT: Pamphleteer's Press, 1993. The Destruction of Yugoslavia, by Branka Magas. London: Verso, 1993.

The essays in *Why Bosnia* powerfully reveal that the view of the war in Bosnia as a civil war rooted in "ancient ethnic hatred" was perpetrated both by the Serbian government in its drive to create a "Greater Serbia" and by the Western governments in their effort to avoid defending Bosnia's multicultural character.

In their introduction, Rabia Ali and Lawrence Lifschultz trace how the U.S. government shifted from the recognition that Bosnia was the target of externally backed aggression (London Conference, August 1992) to the view that the war in Bosnia was a "civil war" conducted by "three warring factions" who had a history of "ancient ethnic feuds." (Geneva Conference, September 1992). Thus the U.S. and the European powers recognized war criminals such as Radovan Karadzic as "legitimate" representatives of the Bosnian Serbs.

Slavoj Zizek, in his essay, "Caught in Another's Dream in Bosnia," writes of the U.S. and European governments and media's "ideological mystification" (p. 234). "The logic is therefore ultimately the same as that of metaracism...the support of 'ethnic cleansing' under the guise of its opposite, the distance of an impartial observer." (p. 234) He further recalls "Hegel's dictum that evil does not reside in the object perceived as bad, but in the innocent gaze which perceives evil all around," and concludes that the truly irrational factor in the Balkans today is "the gaze of the West, babbling about archaic ethnic passions." (p. 239)

This ideological mystification became the basis for the Vance-Owen plan to partition Bosnia into "ethnic cantons" in 1993. It also left the door open for the government of Croatia under Franjo Tudjman to start engaging in its own campaign of territorial annexation and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the spring of 1993. It is still used to justify the U.S. and European governments' refusal to lift the arms embargo, leaving the Bosnian population without the means to defend themselves against genocide.

To move to the real roots of the war, Slavoj Zizek views the rise of neo-fascist nationalism in Serbia in the context of the post-Cold War world and the failure of the crumbling "new world order" of free market capitalism to offer an alternative to humanity: "Hegel said that the moment of victory of a political force is the very moment of its splitting. The recent deadlocks of the triumphant liberal-democratic 'new world order' seems to endorse

fully this view." (p. 235)

Zizek, Ivan Banac and Branka Magas all argue that the rise of rabid nationalism in Serbia was the product of the Communist rulers' attempt to maintain their hold on power by "putting on nationalist clothes" in face of the crumbling of their regimes in a period of immense social, economic and political crises in the 1980s.

Branka Magas' *Destruction of Yugoslavia* examines this question in greater detail in discussing Left dissident intellectuals from the journal *Praxis International*, most specifically the role of the former Marxist philosopher Mihailo Markovic in supported Milosevic's aim of creating an ethnically pure "Greater Serbia."

As early as 1981, when the Belgrade government of Yugoslavia attacked youth demonstrators in the autonomous province of Kosovo and placed them under martial law, *Praxis* was shamefully quiet. In January of 1986, members of the editorial board of *Praxis* signed a petition along with 200 other intellectuals, priests and army officers, calling for: 1) abolishing the autonomous status of Kosovo and Vojvodina, 2) making Serbo-Croatian the official language throughout the Republic of Serbia, and 3) expelling all Albanian immigrants. (p. 52)

Later in 1986, Markovic co-authored the now infamous Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, which became the blueprint for the Milosevic regime's nightmare of a "Greater Serbia." In 1992, following this total betrayal of Marxism, Markovic became Milosevic's vice president.

In a 1986 response, Magas had called this astonishing alignment of *Praxis* editors with narrow nationalism a "complete break with the political and philosophic tradition represented by the journal." She continued, "There has been a somewhat disingenuous feeling that the Party has betrayed them and a search for alternative ideological shores." In the aforementioned petition, the word socialism appears not once. (pp. 52-53)

Magas demonstrates that in face of continuing workers' strikes and mass discontent in the former Yugoslavia, many Leftist intellectuals were turning away from developing socialism as an alternative to free market capitalism. Unfortunately, Magas herself expresses nostalgia for the "system of socialist self-management" under Tito, instead of challenging Tito's distortion of Marxism and the alienation under his state-capitalist regime.

Nevertheless, her discussion of the transformation into opposite of Balkan "socialist humanists," and their responsibility for the rise of neo-fascist nationalism is very important. It shows how deep the retrogression of the Left in the 1980s has been and how deadly the philosophical void in the Left's articulation of an emancipatory vision rooted in Marx's Marxism has become.

Youth

South Africa youth at crossroads

by Jim Guthrie

"Nothing has changed since Nelson Mandela became president," was the verdict of a group of homeless Black South African youth who were staying up all night around a fire to keep from freezing within blocks of the African National Congress's (ANC) national headquarters. The reporter who spent the night talking to young people on the streets of Johannesburg did not have a hard time finding evidence to support this view.

From the overcrowded homeless shelters filled with street kids, to the unemployed youth who complain that they will be too exhausted to look for work the next day because their unheated flats are too cold to sleep in, to the 17-year-old who will attend high school in Soweto after stoically staying up all night guarding a hawk's stand to eke out a living, we can see how the material conditions that Black South African youth are facing three months after the ANC's historic landslide election victory remain unchanged.

Over 57% of young Blacks in South Africa are unemployed; 29% of them live in shacks or huts; only 36% of them live in homes with running water; and only 47% of them have electricity. Over a million young Blacks never go to high school. Young Black women are even more likely to be unemployed or not finish high school than young Black men.

It is out of these objective conditions that the impatience of so many Black youth with adult "leadership" is emerging. This division came out in the open for the world to see last year after Chris Hani, a popular leader among the youth, was assassinated. Thousands of angry youth battled the police outside the stadium where his funeral was held, and ANC general-secretary Cyril Ramaphosa denounced the youth as "agent provocateurs."

The election itself became a source of youth dissent when the voting age was set at 18 by the transitional government. As Thabo Mthandi, 17, a member of the Congress of South African Students put it, "Students sacrificed their lives across years in the struggle, but now we're not allowed a voice in the choice of government." Mandela was practically alone among the ANC leadership to recognize this and advocated the lowering of the voting age to 14.

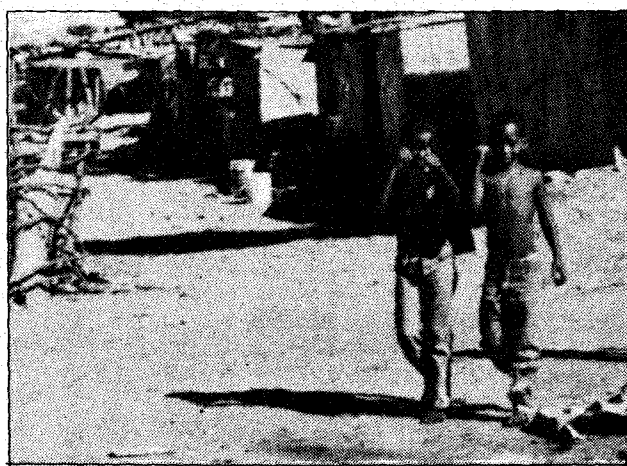
The refusal of the ANC's leadership to lower the voting age must be seen in the context of a larger ideological assault on South African youth of the '90s as a "Lost Generation." As Hein Marais, who has argued in support of this generation, put it: "In the imaginations and rhetoric of progressives, youth have 'mutated' from heroes (Young Lions) into victims (Save the Children) into the demons (Lost Generation) of today." ("The Young Barbarians," *Work In Progress*, July/August 1993).

For American youth, like myself, who were quite literally moved to the idea of revolution by the contemporary actions of our peers in South Africa, learning of this ideological attack is almost as poignant as hearing about the endless massacres our sisters and brothers were forced to endure. Here we thought this "lost gen-

eration" nonsense was only being applied to us!

That this rhetoric is nonsense is clear if you listen to the youth themselves, and just what adults are saying about them. Mlame Mothe, 16, a member of the Pan African Congress' youth wing made it clear that his generation could easily go back to its methods of direct revolt against the new government, but it would not be because they are "lost" or "untameable." "Without land reform," he said as an example, "we cannot start out fresh. And that is what the youth are watching for, the issue our forefathers struggled for in the three centuries since the land was taken from us."

Yet one should not be under the delusion that this generation in the '90s is the same as the youth of the Soweto Uprising of 1976, or even the struggles of the '80s. The anti-apartheid leadership, and not the youth themselves, should be held responsible for the degree to which today's youth have been marginalized from mean-



Shanty town outside Cape Town, South Africa.

ingful participation in the freedom struggle.

This can be seen in how the needed uprooting of the apartheid regime was almost entirely dumped on the backs of the masses with the youth seen as the "cutting edge," and in how quickly the youth were pushed aside once state-power was in sight. In both cases the mobilization of the youth has been viewed primarily as a force. They were "heroes" when their desire to tear up apartheid coincided with the ANC's own political goals.

The consciousness of the young Blacks who helped put them in power will only be acknowledged as valid as long as it continues to conform to the will of the new government. In other words, the jobless, landless, homeless, poorly educated youth will only continue to be viewed as "heroes" to the extent they are willing and able to alienate their consciousness from the revolutionary movement to uproot these objective conditions, that is, alienate their self-consciousness from itself. Any move to rebel against this alienated existence will lead to them being branded villains.

150th anniversary of Marx's humanism

(Continued from page 4)

up" after having long before parted ways with him in the analysis of the actual world. And yet it is at this fork in the road of philosophy "as such" that he turns to praise Hegel for his "insight, expressed within alienation...into the actual appropriation of his objective essence through the destruction of the alienated determination of the objective world, through its transcendence in its alienated existence." (p. 319) After [this] follows his settling of accounts with communism which he praises for transcending private property, but stresses that it is only after "transcendence of this mediation" that we will have a truly human society.

It is as if one watched an actual birth of a new world concept that finally separates him from all others, no matter how close they had been and no matter how they had served as transition points to this totally original idea; to this new fusion of philosophy and politics, theory and practice, that is destined to be known as Marxism.

It is at its point of origin—so much remains to be done. Marx will work at it for the next forty years of his life, but since we have witnessed it as it emerged rather than as a finished product, it is worthwhile to tarry another moment, especially since what we are tracing is the relationship to Hegel, not only in the 1840s, but after he became "Marx the economist" of the 1850s, and "Marx the world revolutionary and head of the International Workingmen's Association," culminating in Marx and the Paris Commune of the 1860s and 1870s. At the point in 1844, when Marxism is first taking shape when it is still a question of "pure" philosophy, what is the point that made it possible to transcend also Feuerbach's philosophic, contemplative materialism? Marx had, even when crediting Feuerbach with "genuine discoveries," noted that "Feuerbach regards the negation of the negation only as the contradiction of philosophy with itself, as philosophy which affirms Theology (Transcendentalism) after it had denied it." But it is necessary to remember that since Hegel himself comprehends that immanent in the concept of "the negation of the negation" is "the only truly positive...an act of self-manifestation of all being, to that extent he has discovered, only the abstract, logical and speculative expression for the movement of history." (p. 305)

Now it is this "movement of history" that Marx never let go of, not only because that was to be the body and

soul of his philosophy, but because, even within the strict confines of "the old philosophy," Hegel had discovered a dialectic which, as he will tell us even as the author of *Capital*, is the "source of all dialectic."⁶ No matter how sharp the divergence, the dialectic will remain "the truth" of all movement so long as we live in an antagonistic, in a class society. Throughout the rest of the essay...he hits at and laughs at the "absorption of objectivity" but limited to thought, "transcendence of alienation" which finds itself back "at home" though this is an insane, irrational "home" which...is supposed to have [been] transcended so that reason itself lives "as unreason." Marx keeps reminding himself that "from the very nature of the activity of philosophy Hegel knows what all other philosophers have done...They have conceived of particular moments of Nature and of human life as moments of self-consciousness." (p. 310) Hegel has "collected them and, instead of a determinate abstraction, has created the abstraction of its entire range as the object of the critical philosophy." (p. 323)

But the promise that "further down we will develop the logical content of absolute negativity" (p. 321) was not fulfilled as the essay remains unfinished. What he had, however, done—and to this day this is precisely what established Communism fears as its main enemy—is to show this absolute negativity at work on the very opposition both to Hegel and the actual capitalistic world, on communism, the transcendence of private property itself, overcoming this transcendence as well in order to create a truly human world, "positive Humanism, beginning from itself"...

None can match this vision. And none can reduce it to their particular brand of Philistinism and/or power complex. It isn't a question of "proving" that Marx never jettisoned this Humanist vision by "quoting" *Capital* to show that the reign of freedom, too, begins only after the realm of necessity: "Beyond it begins that development of human power which is its own end..."⁷ It is that they jettisoned the whole of Marxism, beginning with its very first appearance and not ending with the "mature" *Capital* until it was transformed into its opposite...

6. *Capital*, Vol. I., p. 654 fn., Charles H. Kerr edition [p. 744, Vintage/Pelican edition].

7. *Capital*, Vol. III., p. 954-955, Charles M. Kerr edition [p. 959, Vintage/Pelican edition].

Stalinism warmed over

Chicago—There were about 600 registered participants in last weekend's "founding convention" of the Committees of Correspondence (CoC). These seemed to include everyone from old Stalinists and Trotskyists in search of a rejuvenated Left, to college age youth who wanted their campus organizations to remain independent of Old Left parties, to one man who said that Shoemaker-Levy Nine crashing into Jupiter was Heaven's reaction to the death of the great Kim Il Sung!

There was a lot of talk about new "democracy" in the movement. The CoC began as a split from the Communist Party, USA, so they could sure use some of that, but much of it was belied by what happened at the second afternoon's "Peace and Solidarity" session. When a young feminist introduced a resolution to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia and to oppose the partition of that country as neo-apartheid, it was tabled without discussion.

In fact, the chair refused even to read the resolution out loud, saying that it couldn't be discussed because it would be controversial. Most of those present had no problem with this, while others were reminded of Kafka, but overall it raised questions about what the "human rights" the CoC claims to support are going to mean to them. In this case, it looked like the same old defense of Stalinism expected from the Communist Party.

This was the light in which Angela Davis' keynote speech at that evening's rally had to be seen. Davis herself has a history of uncritical support of Stalinism, shown most clearly in her refusal to sign the appeal of imprisoned Czech dissident Jiri Pelikan, after she herself had been freed from prison aided by international appeals. There was no criticism in her speech of the "socialist states" or explanation of the downfall of Communism in Russia and East Europe, nor did she mention the defining moment in recent U.S. history, the Los Angeles rebellion. Rather, there was an effort to refocus ideology—a common theme throughout the weekend—by claiming that the demonization of minority youth and welfare mothers had replaced anti-Communism as the bourgeoisie's ruling ideology.

While these attacks are certainly real and must be resisted by all means, it is just as certain that they have deeper roots than a simple response to the end of the Cold War, as Angela Davis should well know. So her speech sounded like just one more way to avoid facing the Left's history. In failing to mention the L. A. rebellion, she also avoided dealing with the revolutionary subjectivity of the oppressed she claims to champion.

—Gerard Emmett

Chicago—At the CoC conference there was a great contradiction and contrast between Marx's Marxism and post-Marx Marxism. One example is the voting procedures on issues discussed at the conference.

When a vote was proposed on whether or not to hear a resolution denouncing the genocide in Bosnia, I overheard one man say, "We haven't talked about Bosnia in two years, why should we talk about it now?"

The general consensus was that non-party members should not speak but that they could vote. I was really shocked when the vote was taken to table the motion, party members whipped out red cards which they carried inside of name tags. They held these cards in hands high in the air, as if to declare the party has spoken!

When the second vote was taken to listen to the resolution, nearly the same amount of hands went up. However, only a few of these voters had red cards. The mediator said it was obvious that the majority feels that Bosnia should not be discussed at an "international peace and solidarity meeting."

What came to my mind was the second part of the Communist Manifesto where Karl Marx states, "Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties....They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mold the proletarian movement." These people called themselves "communists" and they claimed to be working towards the socialism which Marx described. What a contradiction! What a contrast to Marx's Marxism! —Christine

'No illusions of reform'

San Francisco—I've become a lot more active in the youth community here, particularly because of writing about Mission High and because things are heating up for youth in the city. Even people I never thought would become politically active are starting to have an opinion. I think it's because life's getting really hard here, what with curfew, MATRIX's police crackdown on homeless and poor people, and budget cuts. People are starting to get it in their heads that writing to your senator just ain't gonna change things.

I recently attended a conference put on by the ACLU for youth called "Say What? An ACLU Celebration of Freedom of Speech." All youth were talking about was how we don't have freedom of speech.

The lawyers who were babysitting us kept saying, "Well girls and boys, why don't we just problem solve that. You could write to your congressperson, and then the President if that doesn't work." Yeah right. As if Clinton cares what some 14-year-old ghetto kid thinks! A lot of the youth at that conference were straight up. They know what's up. No illusions of reform there.

Youth are getting more radical too. I walked in on this discussion some kids were having in my homeroom. They were talking about how society treats us. Then one girl pines up with, "Well, that's why we need a revolution." And everyone agreed with her and went on to talk about how we could avoid becoming like Russia did!

—Lynn Hailey

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

While the three major parties in Mexico's Aug. 21 presidential election are campaigning heavily, an earlier poll indicated that nearly one-third of the Mexican people do not expect a fair election. Other polls have claimed a close race between the ruling PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) and the rightist PAN (National Action Party), with the left PRD (Democratic Revolutionary Party) trailing both.

The biggest challenge to the 65 years of one-party rule by PRI has been the Chiapas revolt and the unrest it unleashed throughout Mexico. The loosening of the ruling party's grip on power will mean even more fraud and violence in the elections.

Most recently, the PRD candidate for governor of Chiapas, Amado Avendano, was seriously injured July 25 when his car was run off the road by a truck. Supporters say they have no doubt it was an attempt to kill him organized by PRI. Avendano, whose family publishes a newspaper in San Cristobal, had expressed sympathy with the aims of the Chiapas revolt and later met with Zapatista leaders before declaring his candidacy in May.

The rulers may think they have bottled up the revolt in Chiapas by surrounding the area in which the Zapatistas are headquartered. But the movement begun in Chiapas is seeking new allies.

Editor's note: We received the following from Yan Maria in Mexico City who was allowed into the "neutral territory" of Chiapas in June-July. She stayed in the Zapatista camp and spoke with men and women soldiers.

Zapatistas and other residents of Chiapas have cleared away an area of Chiapan jungle and are constructing an

Bosnia sold out again

On July 30, the so-called Bosnia Contact Group—composed of the U.S., Russia, Germany, France and Britain—voted once again to do virtually nothing in the face of the intransigence of the chauvinist Serbian leadership in Bosnia, the very group which has been responsible for three years of genocide, rape and "ethnic cleansing," and whose leaders have been singled out by human rights groups as war criminals.

Thus ended with a whimper a much-ballyhooed Great Power "ultimatum" demanding that the Serbian chauvinists (Serbs were less than 30% of the population of prewar Bosnia) agree to pull back to 49% of Bosnian territory and that the multi-ethnic Bosnian government keep only the other 51%. The Bosnian government agreed reluctantly to this apartheid-type ethnic partition plan which would have ratified much of the past "ethnic cleansing," but the Serbian chauvinists refused. In the days leading up to July 30, Serbian forces began to tighten the siege of Sarajevo, killed a British soldier and issued bellicose threats of a bloodbath.

On the ground, some Bosnian freedom fighters expressed relief that the plan had collapsed. They feel that the pressure of public opinion, especially in the U.S. and France, will force an eventual lifting of the arms embargo on Bosnia. Its lifting will permit them to fight more effectively for their own liberation. (See book review on page 10.)

Future of Mexico on eve of elections

auditorium and living facilities for an estimated 4-5,000 visitors expected between Aug. 6-9. Starting over a month ago, the EZLN (Zapatistas) began sending out calls to marginalized sectors of Mexico's "civilian" population inviting them to meet among themselves in preparation for a national non-party, non-governmental political convention.

So labor organizations, women's groups, networks of land "squatters," youth groups, peasants, indigenous groups and representatives of gay and lesbian organizations from every state in Mexico have been invited to send representatives to the convention bringing their own lists of demands to be incorporated into a formal set of demands to be presented publically after the convention. This is the first such convention since 1910 when the Mexican Revolution attempted a democratic resolution to the country's many inequities.

According to subcomandante Marcos, "We have not threatened (the government, the military) in any way. We are willing to work things out peacefully but it is apparent (with the approach of more and more military personnel in areas surrounding the Zapatista camps) that the military sees things differently.

The two fundamental demands which will be announced after the convention are: 1) the construction of a pluralistic, transitional government emanating from the will of the people, and 2) the creation of a new Mexican constitution expressing the people's heartfelt needs.

This convention is being seen as an organism to give voice to the needs of the people of Mexico, and is part of

the Zapatistas' civil resistance to change the status—not only of the Chiapan indigenous population "who have inherited the idea that these lands are theirs and must be returned"—but of the Mexicans throughout the country who, as Marcos points out, have been very supportive of the Zapatista movement. The results of the elections will give an indication of whether or not the government is taking them seriously. If not, the Zapatistas are prepared to defend themselves.



SOUTH AFRICAN grocery clerks from the militant Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union struck for higher wages in mid-July and were attacked by police with snarling dogs and rubber bullets. In six months around the April election of Nelson Mandela, 1.2 million days of workers' time were devoted to strikes. "It's our turn to be treated as human beings," said a Black woman textile worker.

Attacks on East Timor

In mid-July, Indonesian soldiers brutally dispersed a rally of 500 youth in Indonesian-occupied East Timor. They were protesting an earlier incident in which soldiers from Indonesia's predominantly Muslim army had desecrated communion wafers at a Roman Catholic Church in Dili, the capital. Most Timorese are Catholic. Their leftist revolution upon gaining independence from Portugal in the 1970s was soon crushed by an Indonesian invasion, and resistance has continued since despite the massacre of hundreds of thousands by the Indonesian military.

In June in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, several days of street protests followed the decision by the long-ruling military-dominated Suharto government to shut down three popular new magazines. This occurred soon after one of them had publicized high-level corruption. Protesters took to the streets on several occasions and, on June 27 hundreds were attacked by police who beat them with rattan canes. Many prominent intellectuals have been involved in these protests, while a retired general, Harris Nasution, has also criticized the bannings.

British political climate

Oxford, England—Just in the last few weeks, the British political climate has perceptibly changed. Elections for local government, the European elections and a series of parliamentary by-elections all showed a collapse of the Conservative vote. In part this is because the Tories have been tarnished by a series of scandals: arms deals with Iraq, Indonesia and Malaysia and sexual scandals just when they were promoting their "Back to Basics" campaign on traditional morality.

Also, in part, it results from the deep unpopularity of the government imposing Value Added Tax on domestic heating. More generally, there seems to be a spread of disillusionment with new right "free market" ideology that now includes sections of the middle class who previously approved. This shakeup of employment has been so widespread that middle managers also feel threatened.

The most significant difference between Labour and Conservatives seems to be their policies on employment. Labour is committed to a minimum wage and a 48-hour maximum legal working week (as per the Social Chapter of the Maastricht Treaty). Prime Minister Major attacks these modest proposed workers' rights, claiming that they would "destroy British jobs" by letting them be undercut by international competition.

Labour counters (correctly) that Major is intent on a sweatshop economy. Labour asserts that it is possible to have a "high wage/high skills" economy, supported by government training programmes. This depends on one highly unrealistic assumption—that capital will have the capacity to employ large numbers of skilled workers.

Over the past four weeks, 4,600 railway signal workers have been taking strike action every Wednesday. Strike have been few and far between (and successful strike very rare indeed) in recent years, following the bitter defeats of the 1980s. The signal workers have been driven into this one by the outrageous behavior of the Tory government.

The employer, Railtrack, had made an offer of 5.7% but the government, which has decided to hold out public sector pay, got Railtrack to withdraw it. Railtrack is one of the businesses into which British Rail has been split in preparation of privatisation. This illustrates the nature of state-capitalism today—not a question of ownership, which is increasingly privatised, but the state intervening in the economy.

—Richard Buntin

Death of Kim Il Sung

Kim Il Sung, who constructed a Stalinist state-capitalist regime in North Korea which seemed to be an exaggerated form even of the term "totalitarian," left power upon his death in July to his son Kim Jong Il, in what has been termed the world's first Communist monarchy.

Kim Jong Il surely faces competition from rivals for power, some of whom may advocate different policies toward the masses at home, toward South Korea or toward the various powers interested in Korea—from the U.S. to Japan, and from Russia to China. Neither the domestic nor the international situation is without risks. A year ago, the Washington Post reported food riots. There are undoubtedly hopes for change simmering from below, hopes which will certainly feel at least some encouragement today, in the wake of the death of their tyrannical "Great Leader."

In South Korea as well, the masses are not to be discounted. Labor revolt continues there, with two occupation strikes in the auto industry taking place in June and with much popular disillusionment at the refusal of the South Korean regime to allow any of its citizens to attend Kim's funeral. So far, Kim Jong Il has shown at least one instance of political astuteness, greatly embarrassing the South Korean leaders with his open invitation to southerners to attend that funeral at a time when sentiment for Korean reunification is running strong.

Kim Jong Il commands one of Asia's largest armies, whose missiles can now reach Japan, and which may or may not have nuclear weapons. Few observers believe that North Korea's military-police-party regime can continue in its present form for very much longer, but even fewer doubt its ability to strike out with great destructive power against perceived internal or external threats.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958), *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her recreation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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OCTOBER 1994

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Marx's Capital on the job



by David L. Anderson

There are two terms from Marx's *Capital* that have come to light at work. They are being made concrete in our day-to-day fight just to "live." The first is the division of thinking from doing. I see that in the way management at Toys-R-Us in 1989 created the new title of "department head," which is a glorified worker who gets a title, a buck more and lots of grief. This was a way to separate the new, younger workers and the so-called non-educated workers from the older and formally educated worker.

This attempt at separation never really worked out to the boss' satisfaction. Because the department heads were close to the workers by the fact that they were hourly and had no real power, just to be told by the bosses to lean on the other workers, i.e., do their dirty work, they told us what the bosses were up to and helped us to fight them. So now, in 1994, the company is going to replace them with "assistant managers," who will be given more pay and keys to the store, and will be salaried.

I think this action puts to rest those who think that we can have a so-called team concept with the bosses and more thinking put in the hands of the workers. The internal nature of capital and labor puts us into two totally different "teams" and, therefore, the more they try to act as if we are on the same team, the more the division deepens.

The second term from Marx that came up at work is the despotic plan of capital. A week at my job puts this fetish of the plan in its place with its unworkability. Now is the slow time at Toys-R-Us, so the bosses are trying to cut back on hours and people, but nothing ever goes according to plan. Trucks keep coming, people are not

(Continued on page 3)

Black World

Haiti and 'the problem of the 20th century'



by Lou Turner

Her liberty was born in blood, cradled in misfortune, and has lived more or less in a storm of revolutionary turbulence.

—Frederick Douglass, Haiti Pavilion, Chicago Exposition, January 2, 1893

There is an uncomfortable tension underlying these powerful words of Frederick Douglass, uttered in Chicago near the end of his life—a tension, more unsettling today, because, like Douglass, African-American leaders have been used by an American president to further U.S. imperialist aims in the Black world.

President Benjamin Harrison had sought to use Douglass, as the newly appointed Consul-General to Haiti, to secure a U.S. naval base at the Mole St. Nicholas in northwest Haiti from newly elected Haitian President Louis Hyppolite, in 1889. In 1893, Douglass could still tell his audience at the Chicago Exposition about the proud, unbowed Haitian masses and declaim against any colonialist moves by Western powers to dominate the Black republic, forgetful of the opportunist use to which U.S. "national interests" put his stature and his loyalty to the "Party of Lincoln."

The heirs to this contradictory legacy of Frederick Douglass today are many and, unlike Douglass, representative of the ruling-class pretensions of the African-American bourgeoisie. President Clinton has strategically deployed African-American leadership in carrying out his imperialist Haitian policy: former Congressman William Gray has served as point man for Clinton's policy inside the Administration, even as TransAfrica's Randall Robinson, a major critic of the policy, has beat the drum for invasion outside the Administration; the Congressional Black Caucus has pressured a waffling Clinton into action on Haiti, only in the end to be used by Clinton to get badly needed votes for his anti-Black, anti-crime bill; and finally, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell provided the denouement with his 11th hour resurrection of the bloody military dictator Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras as an "honorable man."

"Colin Powell was the star," a high-ranking policy-maker said afterward, "writes Anthony Lewis. "He per-

(Continued on page 9)

Under the whip of U.S. occupation

Who will listen to the Haitian masses?

by Peter Wermuth

The entrance of the Haitian masses onto the streets of Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haitien the week of Sept. 25-Oct. 1, marching against Haiti's police and demanding "Out with Cedras!" and "It's Our Time!" has unchained the dimension which the U.S. military invasion of Haiti aimed to subsume—the self-activity of the masses. By making their voices heard despite a de facto alliance between the U.S. forces and the dictatorial regime of Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras, the Haitian masses have begun to strip the pretense off the invasion and expose its class nature more starkly than could any anti-imperialist.

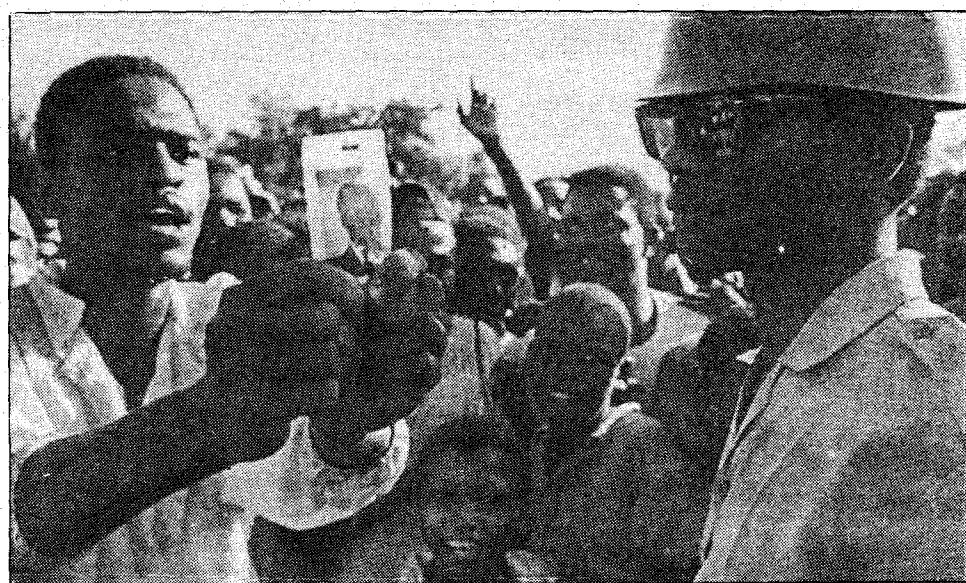
The demonstrations and attacks on police stations are hardly what the U.S. had in mind when the triumvirate of Jimmy Carter, Sam Nunn and Colin Powell arranged a last-minute deal paving the way for the de facto U.S. alliance with Haiti's military. Not only does the agreement leave Cedras in power until Oct. 15 and provide for a total amnesty for the military thugs who murdered over 4,000 Haitians since 1991, but it calls for the U.S. to work in tandem with the Haitian military to "restore stability" to this troubled island.

The Clinton administration was so concerned that the interests of the Haitian ruling class not be threatened by the eventual return of President Aristide that at first it even ordered U.S. troops to stand by passively while Haitian protesters were clubbed to death by the Cedras regime's police forces.

Though the U.S. quickly reversed itself on this, its military presence did not prevent a bomb from being tossed by pro-Cedras forces into a crowd of Haitians demanding democracy on Sept. 29 in Port-au-Prince.

TWO TYPES OF 'DEMOCRACY'

It would nevertheless be the gravest mistake to focus on the imperialist machinations of the U.S. to the detriment of the actions of the Haitian masses. The depth, daring and reason of their self-activity provides the only basis for effectively opposing Clinton's policies. At a moment when many in the U.S. support Clinton's invasion by ignoring its intended aim to shackle Haiti's mass movement, while many on the right oppose the invasion on the basis of the racist notion that Haiti "is not worth the life of one U.S. soldier," we cannot afford to stand on any ground other than the self-determination of the



Supporters of ousted President Aristide courageously show his photo to a policeman.

Idea of Freedom.

There is no question that the Haitian masses face many new barriers in the way of their self-activity. Not only has the structure and power of the Haitian military been left intact, but the island is now occupied by over 18,000 U.S. troops. The troops are there to ensure that the conditions laid down by the U.S. for Aristide's return to power will be obeyed: "no retribution" against the agents of the old regime, "maintenance of public order" through a refurbished police force based on the old military hierarchy, and implementation of a World Bank-International Monetary Fund plan to restructure the economy along the lines of "free market" capitalism.

According to Chavannes Jean-Baptiste, head of The Peasant Movement of Papay, Haiti's largest peasant organization, Clinton's objective is to ensure that "Aristide's hands will be tied, crippling him from carrying out the popular projects for which he was given an overwhelming mandate of 67% of the popular vote in 1990. Haiti would be further entrenched in the U.S. sphere, and subjected to more of the U.S. notion of 'democracy'—a notion rejected by the Haitian people, who want democracy rooted in popular participation in economic and political decisions."

It is precisely this subjective factor—the determination to be free on the part of the Haitian masses—which

(Continued on page 10)

First of two parts...

'Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning'

Raya Dunayevskaya's 1974 lecture to the Hegel Society of America • • • • • Page 4

Contradictory results of Quebec elections

Toronto—As is to be expected in the labyrinth of Canadian electoral politics, the results of Quebec's provincial election in September are ambiguous, inconclusive and subject to a myriad of interpretations.

After ten years in power the Liberals did well to end up in a virtual dead heat (at 44%) with the Parti Quebecois (PQ) in terms of popular vote which, however, translated into a comfortable majority for the PQ in the provincial legislature. The newly formed Parti Action Democratique du Quebec, a splinter of the Liberals which calls itself sovereigntist but not separatist (whatever that means) won 6.5% of the vote and one seat.

Because the PQ has made it clear that a referendum on independence will follow in the immediate future (1995)—unlike the four-year delay following its 1976 victory—the "separatist" debate is once again on the front burner in Canada. For PQ leader Jacques Parizeau, the referendum represents the "third period" in the hockey game leading to Quebec independence (the first being the overwhelming victory in the Province of Quebec of the independentist Bloc Quebecois in the last federal election, and the second being the current PQ victory).

In the aftermath of the election, one thing is clear: the Great Wall that has always separated Canada's "Two Solitudes" (i.e., its French and English peoples) is, unfortunately, in no danger of crumbling.

Francophone support for the PQ (and for some form of separation, as reflected in opinion polls) is in the 70-80% range. This confirms the continued existence of a national identity and a passion for some form of special status within Canada if not outright separation. Never-

theless, the media and politicians in the Rest of Canada continue to maintain that separatism means only the destruction of Canada. There is a blatant campaign to demonize the independentist movement and its leaders, who are portrayed only as crude opportunists and nation-destroyers. This French-English polarization fits with the regressive racism that is reflected in the increasing scapegoating of refugees and immigrants and the popularity of the ultra-right Reform Party of Canada.

That is not to say that either the Parti Quebecois or the Bloc Quebecois (with its leader Lucien Bouchard, a former Tory and crony of Brian Mulroney!) represent a progressive nationalism or have a program that addresses the underlying structural malaise that has crippled the Quebec economy. The PQ, which still sees itself as a mildly social democratic movement, showed when it held power from 1976 to 1984 that it could repress labour (particularly its teachers) as well as the Liberals; it continues to support the free trade agreements with the U.S., which have caused the loss of tens of thousands of jobs in the depressed city of Montreal; and it gave full support to the Liberal government in the repression of the Mohawk uprising at Oka.

The PQ is particularly vulnerable, in fact, both from a moral and a practical standpoint, on the question of the aspirations of Quebec's indigenous peoples, who insist that the "land claim" of the French majority in Quebec vis-a-vis the rest of Canada cannot be settled until native

(Continued on page 5)

Feminist theory debate continues

Laurie Cashdan's essay in the March issue of *News & Letters*, "Feminism and Marx's humanism reconsidered," even where I disagree with her, read to me like a genuine working out of complex issues.

I couldn't agree more with her contention that "what illuminates the relationship between Marx's comments on the family [in *German Ideology* and *Capital*] is Marx's dialectical method." I would have to say that the failure to grasp Marx's "concentration not on any ahistorical pronouncements...but on the process of transformation of one social form into its opposite"—whether we are talking about the family or other social forms—is so common as to be the norm.

And yet what an inadequate read of Marx [this norm] renders! I think missing that dimension begets readings of Marx that fail to grasp its relevance for today. In fact, how could that not be the case, since what is being missed is precisely the motion of history. Without that, one could be led into thinking of Marx's work as an analysis of a moment frozen in time.

I also like the way Cashdan took on criticisms such as "gender drops out entirely from Marx's analysis" or that Marx naturalizes and de-historicizes the family. I am always happy to read a good trashing of vulgar readings. That is not to imply I think Marx is adequate to feminism, but Laurie demonstrates that logical possibilities do exist for "revolutionizing our ideas of liberation."

But I have a few problems with the essay. I thought the bits on Foucault played a little fast and loose. (Here I am in that awkward position of seeming to defend something I don't really agree with. I think Foucault, et al., drop the ball, but I think the ball itself is important.)

Jennifer Ring's claim [in *Modern Political Theory and Contemporary Feminism*] that post-modernist theorists act as if "the power of the past is undone by the act of literary will" is at best a gross generalization and at worst a woeful misread of many so-called postmodernists. Some theorists are indeed guilty

of that. But to use it this way seems to feed into a straw-man construction of a wide and diverse body of thought.

Also, I have to question, on two counts, Laurie's assertion that "Foucault's argument that subjects are also structured through this discourse makes it impossible to imagine how individuals have agency." First, even if this were true, I am suspicious of a logic of "I dislike the conclusion, therefore the premise is wrong." I would be more comfortable in scrapping the conclusion if she had gone further into Foucault's work and dismantled the assertions that (supposedly) lead to that conclusion.

Overall, I think she does do a good job of showing the way certain theorists have run into brick walls in their attempts to conceptualize women's agency through discursive theory. But, at least to my mind, she really hasn't done anything to invalidate the idea itself. In other words, she rightly points out weaknesses in certain employments/deployments, but not in the concepts at the center of discursive theory.

But more important is the second count. I am not at all convinced that Foucault's claim that discourse also structures subjects "makes it impossible" to imagine agency. (Note the word *also* in the original sentence.) It may have made it impossible for Foucault. And it certainly makes it impossible (for me anyway) to conceive of agency in the more traditional configurations. But these are quite different from saying it can't be thought at all.

Think of the two charges leveled against discourse theory. First, it acts as if the past can be undone by an act of literary will. But on the other hand, it is charged with eliminating entirely the notion of agency. See the problem? I think that this contradiction at the very least suggests this area is too diverse to be treated quite as monolithically as it tends to be.

These are some of the reasons I am interested in at least a part of what I understand Gayatri Spivak's project to be about. I like her insistence on keeping several theoretical perspectives—Marxism, feminism, deconstructionism and postcolonialism—in play at once, each continually displacing the other. I'm not advocating a sort of Derridian notion of endlessly shifting sands on which nothing can ever be built. But I do think it is crucial at this historical moment to use the disjunctures among various such discourses to push the limits of current ideas of and for liberation.

That is not to say that Spivak gives equal valence to those discourses. It seems clear to me anyway that she privileges Marxism as absolutely necessary but not sufficient and uses the other discourses to force open perhaps some too neatly covered over seams. And what I especially like is after doing that, she resists the almost overwhelming temptation to rush in and close those gaps. I think confronting those disruptions is perhaps the essential task for the Left today and should be an integral part of the way we take up issues like the dialectics of organization, for example.

Chicago feminist

Letter from a Reader

Latina homecare workers

New York—Homecare workers held a public meeting Sept. 6 in Washington Heights (el Alto Manhattan) to provide information on abuses against home attendants and their struggle for better conditions. The meeting was organized by the Coordinating Committee of United Workers of the Institute Homecare Services.

Among the various abuses and violations of their union contract are the reduction of these women's work schedules, converting them into part-time workers; the hiring of new workers when there are workers with seniority rights willing to work the shifts; the lack of full medical coverage for all the workers and their dependents; and the lack for respect for their human conditions. (The agency does not inform the workers about the health conditions of the clients, who are elderly people in Harlem and Washington Heights. One woman complained that on many occasions she "discovered" by herself that some of her clients had active tuberculosis.)

Because of their union's (OPEIU Local 153) failure to defend their rights, the home attendants have been organizing themselves for almost a year. "The struggle began one year ago. We aren't fighting for ourselves only, but for all the working women that are suffering the same abuses."

Fifty home attendants, mostly Latina women, presented a protest letter Aug. 8 to Suleika Cabrera, director of the Institute for Homecare Services and of the Institute for Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly. It exposed the abuses that they have been suffering for the past year. The response of Cabrera was to fire 10 workers invoking Article 13 of the contract which forbids striking and picketing in the work place. "We only delivered a letter," said one of the women at the meeting.

The organized home attendants are demanding full medical coverage for themselves and their families; that the agency provide the time sheet free of charge and on time (currently a form that they have to pay for from their pockets); that the agency pay for holidays for all the workers; that in any conflict between the agency and a worker, a representative chosen by the worker be present; the rehiring of all of the discharged and suspended workers; and that favoritism be stopped.

For information, call Home Attendants Support Committee at the Latino Workers' Center: (212) 473-3936. Or write: 191 East 3rd Street, New York, NY 10009.

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A voice from the Delta

Editor's note: The following statement was prepared by Sarah White, Black labor activist and catfish processing worker from Indianola, Miss., for the Sept. 2 national gathering of Women's Liberation-News and Letters. For a copy of the proceedings, send \$2 to N&L.

We are a living example, the Delta Pride workers, that if you believe in the dream and have people like you, all that never stops. Things can happen.

Sitting back recalling how our ancestors would sing in the fields and our great grandparents would tell us of the old stories and sing the old field songs, but never facing reality that we were just a remake of the lives they live when that plantation mentality so severely surrounded us that we were blinded to the cause that so many Civil Rights leaders had opened to us. It was the '80s but we lived far beyond that, we lived the life of our foreparents.

Mississippi is where I live but it's a cruel corner of the world where no one would ever want to live, because the plantation-built structure prevails over everything (there's no voice for the little people). What do the little people do? That's the question we had to ask ourselves in 1986. What do we do now?

Sunflower County was not a county of opportunity. It was a cotton growing county so jobs were scarce when farmers took up the catfish business. We were eager to start work and disband the welfare lines. But the picture that was painted was not so beautiful when we had the chance to look at it again. That new-found feeling of being independent and part of the working society was destroyed in 1981 when the doors of Delta Pride opened.

I want you to know if it had not been for you supporting us, believing in us, we could not have had the strength to keep fighting this long. I promise if you stay strong I will dedicate my life to cleaning up the South.

'Comfort' women reject plan

South Korean "comfort" women angrily rejected Japan's grudging attempt at restitution for their war brothels in a demonstration at the Japanese embassy in Seoul, Aug. 31. Shouting slogans and throwing eggs at the embassy, the women denounced as inadequate a \$1 billion Japanese plan to finance cultural and student exchanges to atone for forcing as many as 200,000 Korean, Chinese and Filipina women and young girls to work as sex slaves for Japanese soldiers during World War II. Earlier in August, Filipina women who had also been forced to work in war brothels demonstrated in Manila against Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama demanding direct compensation.

During years of regular demonstrations, the women have demanded not only an apology but direct compensation. The government has refused to provide direct compensation despite a worldwide outcry, including within Japan. The International Women's Year Liaison Group of 52 Japanese women's organizations met with women members of the Japanese Diet throughout the summer insisting on a formal apology and compensation to the comfort women.

—Mary Jo Grey

Novelist Taslima Nasreen still in danger

Taslima Nasreen's novel *Lajja* (Shame) was banned in Bangladesh within five months of its publication (1993) on the grounds that it "disturbed" communal peace. One has only to read Nasreen's 1994 Preface to the English translation to see that in fact *Lajja* is a passionate indictment of communalism and fundamentalism. Islamic fundamentalists have called for her death and the Bangladeshi government has attempted to silence Nasreen, but she has emerged on the global scene as a feminist and a humanist who refuses to be silenced.

Lajja is unapologetic about its political intentions. It is an expose of the persecution of the Hindu minority by the Muslim majority in Bangladesh following the demolition of the mosque in Ayodhya by Hindu fundamentalists in India in December 1992. While documenting the horrors that rocked Bangladesh following the destruction of the mosque, Nasreen explores the perversion of human relationships by the invasion of communalism, or ethnic chauvinism, into people's everyday lives.

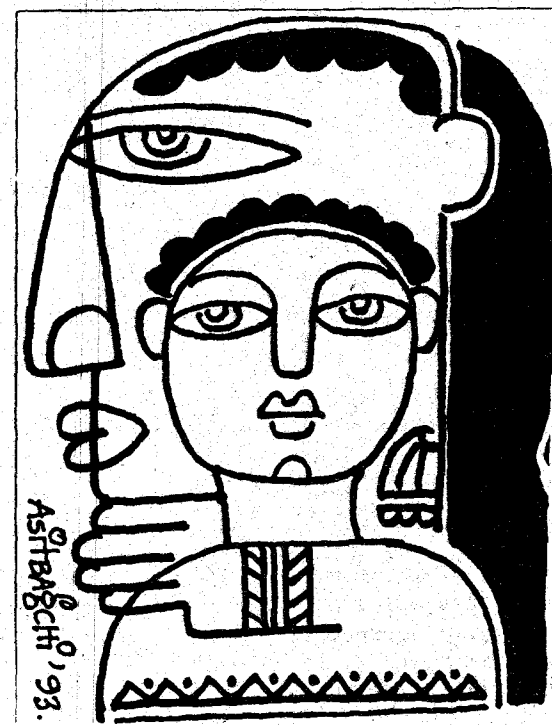
The novel focuses on the political disillusionment of an indigenously Bangladeshi Hindu family, the Duttas. The Duttas are not orthodox Hindus. They have a rich history of involvement in liberation struggles in Bangladesh: from the 1952 Language Movement which declared Bengali the official language to Bangladesh's 24-year struggle to gain independence from Pakistan.

The family is historically woven into the national fabric of Bangladesh which is ripped apart by communalism. In the end, the daughter, Maya (symbolizing the veil of illusion that is lifted), is kidnapped by fundamentalist thugs, and the rest of the family flees.

What Nasreen captures is that there are two kinds of nationalism. While she attacks narrow nationalism based on religious fundamentalism, Nasreen recognizes the power of Bangladeshi nationalism rooted in the mass movements she discusses and in the 1,000-year-old culture and history of the region.

The question that remains unanswered is: how could a country so rich in national liberation movements succumb to the fundamentalism of the religious right? Indeed within eight years of Bangladesh's independence, the secular Constitution was altered to make Islam the State religion.

Nasreen implicates not only the right wing, but also the Left which has failed to intervene in the rise of narrow nationalism. Thus, the title *Lajja* meaning "Shame" calls on all of us to assume responsibility for allowing re-



ligious extremism to blossom in so many nations.

Lajja provides no facile solutions, no automatic redemption. Today, Taslima Nasreen is herself the victim of fundamentalism. She is now exiled from her homeland, and religious fanatics continue to clamor for her life. *Lajja* is an indictment of religious extremism that calls for us in the U.S. to show our solidarity with Nasreen.

In the Preface to the 1994 English translation of *Lajja*, Nasreen writes: "The mullahs who would murder me will kill everything progressive in Bangladesh if they are allowed to prevail. It is my duty to protect my beautiful country from them and I call on all those who share my values to help me defend my rights....I am convinced that the only way the fundamentalist forces can be stopped is if all of us who are secular and humanistic join together and fight their malignant influence. I, for one, will not be silenced." Solidarity with Taslima Nasreen!

—Maya Jhansi

Migrant farm workers battle poverty

Eugene, Ore.—Driving the Willamette Valley between here and Portland you traverse a rich farm-land—orchards laden with apples and peaches and fields overflowing with berries, tomatoes and cucumbers. But as in so many other agricultural areas, the richness of the harvest contrasts sharply with the poverty of the farm workers.

Here the workers are primarily Mexican, migrating up from the fields of California. They work piece-rate, 12¢ or 14¢ a pound for strawberries, so much per bucket of cucumbers. Sometimes the arrangement for cucumbers is a form of sharecropping, with workers being paid 30% or so of what the farm receives from a cannery.

There is no guaranteed wage, no guaranteed number of hours, no overtime pay. Each day starts out new, with the farms posting their rate per pound. One farm, Kraemer, covered the faces of their scales so that weights greater than 35 pounds could not be read. They denied workers credit for any strawberries they picked over 35 pounds per two crates.

Then there are the labor camps where many of the workers live. At Kraemer Farms the camp is a two-story bunker with low ceilings containing double-decker wooden bunks made from 2x 4s with a piece of carpeting as the "mattress." Perhaps 40 to 50 workers share a shower room with three showers and portable toilets outside.

Against these kinds of conditions the farm workers have begun organizing. A union, PCUN (Pineros Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste, Northwest Treeplanters and Farmworkers United), has been formed. Kraemer Farms has been a principal target. It owns or leases some 2,000 acres, producing 16 crops, and operates eight labor camps, charging some 200 workers \$50 each per week for room and board.

In August 1991, 100 of 120 cucumber workers at Kraemer went on strike for higher wages. After three days a wage increase of 33% was won and the union suspended its strike. In 1992 Kraemer refused to hire 21 former strikers and refused to negotiate with the union.

Kraemer Farms is a member of Steinfeld's, 25 grower-suppliers who market tens of thousands of pounds of pickles annually. As well, they are part of NORPAC, a cooperative owned by 250 growers with national and international distribution under the brand names FLAV-IT-PAC frozen foods, Santiam canned foods and Stone Mill Foods.

PCUN requested that NORPAC and Steinfeld's urge Kraemer Farms to negotiate. They refused. PCUN called for a boycott of NORPAC and Steinfeld's products. The boycott is now two years old and still in effect. The union is picketing stores, particularly in the Portland area, which carry products from the grower groups.

Kraemer Farms this summer set piece-rate wages so low that the workers conducted three work stoppages. On Aug. 6 half of the 100-plus cucumber workers halted the harvest after receiving weekly paychecks of \$80 to \$150. On Aug. 22 Oregon Department of Agriculture in-

spectors cited Kraemer for again covering the scales.

Work stoppages have occurred at other farms this summer and at a small non-union cannery where the owner owed \$100,000 in back wages. The new labor militancy is taking place despite the great difficulties Oregon farm workers face, particularly a growing anti-immigrant climate.

For more information on the farm workers union and the boycott, contact PCUN, 300 Young Street, Woodburn, OR 97071.

—Eugene Walker



Cucumber harvesters on strike in 1991.

Faucet plant closes

Morgantown, W. Va.—"The announcement that they were going to close this plant down came like a thunderbolt out of the blue," declared a worker at the Sterling Plumbing Group Inc. "Some workers have been here 40 years," he added, "but in all that time there had never been any idea that they would close the whole plant down."

The worker was referring to the news given out on Tuesday, Sept. 13, that the plumbing fixture plant, in operation since the mid-1940s, would be closed in 18 months. More than 300 workers are employed there, and many of them have never worked elsewhere. As another worker said, "What are these people going to do, where can they go? They can't do anything else."

The company blamed the plant closing on federal Environmental Protection Act (EPA) regulations to go into effect in 1996 that decrease the amount of lead that can be used in plumbing fixtures. The technology at the Sterling plant can't meet the lead requirements without the installation of new equipment that the company says would be too expensive.

There is a union at the plant, United Steelworkers of America Local 6214, but the union officials were unable to tell the workers anything, since the union was not informed of the action beforehand. Some workers are talking about the other plants Sterling runs in Tennessee, Alabama and Arkansas, and charging that Sterling wants to move down South to get away from the union and to have workers who will work for cheaper wages.

Over the years there have been many battles between the workers and management over wages, fringe benefits and conditions of work. Small brass particles that often saturate the air, especially in the buffing department, cause serious respiratory problems and skin infections. Many workers have been ordered by their doctors to leave the plant or face serious physical ailments.

Located in a small community, Sabraton, some two miles east of Morgantown, the plant is an economic mainstay of the town. Not only are there many husbands and wives working in the plant, for some families everyone of working age works there. The plant closing will obviously destroy the livelihood of these families. As the bartender at a local bar frequented by the Sterling workers stated, "This is going to be a ghost town when that plant closes."

—Andy Phillips

Fight employer abuses Boycott Howe Apparel!

Workers at the Howe K. Sipes Co. in Memphis, Tenn., voted in September 1993, in a National Labor Relations Board election, for representation by Furniture Workers Local 282. The owners' and supervisors' lack of respect for these workers forced them to seek union representation.

Since the election victory, the employees have been harassed daily by management, including threats of physical harm. The majority are African-American women. Sipes management has attempted to intimidate the workers with threats of firings and suspensions if they continue to organize.

Management people have not even felt restrained in calling members of the union bargaining committee "bitches" and "trash."

Union members at Howe K. Sipes Co. will continue to struggle for a contract with the solidarity that they have received from supporters in Memphis and nationally but they still need our help.

Boycott baseball and softball uniforms and jackets sold under the Howe Athletic Apparel label!

To give support and for information, contact Furniture Workers Local 282 by calling (901) 725-1331.

—UPIU Local 7837 "Road Warrior"

Companies always want more

Oklahoma City—Dayton Tire workers are on strike here. The company has hired 100 new people to replace the strikers, and some of the scabs were on TV complaining about the strikers threatening them. Don't these people see what Dayton Tire is doing? The strikers are only fighting to keep their benefits and for no pay cuts and safety. They are not asking for more! Companies always seem to want more from workers!

I'm sure that those 100 new hires needed the jobs, but so do the strikers. Dayton Tire needs workers to produce for them. That's one reason no worker should ever cross a picket line, because they could put Dayton Tire in the same struggle that workers face daily: survival.

There is very little in the news media about this strike, except when it concerns Dayton Tire or the police. It's like they are afraid of the public reaction to the real problems of everyday life.

—Working woman

High fashion sweatshops

Los Angeles—The Asian Immigrant Workers Association has been holding monthly rallies in front of the Jessica McClintock store in Beverly Hills in protest against the exploitation of workers, mainly Chinese immigrant women, in McClintock sweatshops. For a dress that sells for \$175, the workers are paid \$6. A consumer boycott of Jessica McClintock, Scott McClintock and Gunne Sax labels has created a big drop in sales.

At the Sept. 17 rally there were about 100 people, including a large contingent from Justice for Janitors whose members face a similar situation of labor exploitation by large corporations that deny responsibility because they hire contractors who then hire and pay the workers, as does McClintock. We marched for at least two hours in front of the store, despite the efforts from the store workers and the police to intimidate us.

—Mary H.

Ecuadoran Indians scorned

Reading about Peruvian Marxist Jose Carlos Mariategui in the last issue of News & Letters reminded me of Ecuador and the stigma that exists there if you have an Indian last name. It affects all the activities a person can do.

This is the experience I had when I suddenly and urgently needed to get an identification card. There was a line of people waiting outside the office about two blocks long. Most were peasants and the poor of the city, and many had slept overnight in the street or come very early in the morning.

I had a friend who enabled me to go to the front of the line. I felt very ashamed and even afraid that the people in line would do something about my going to the front, but my friend told me with a smile not to worry (for her it was natural), and the people didn't look at me with surprise or anger, but on the contrary, with respect.

Once inside the office, when the clerks called out names, they addressed people with Spanish last names with the formal "usted," but they addressed people with Indian last names in a derisive way, making them repeat their names as if to show off that the clerk was not familiar with Indians, and using the familiar form "tu." To this day, the worst insult anyone can get is to be called "indio." What worries me is whether people accept this as natural, or whether they think nothing can be done to change it.

If in addition to being Indian you are also a woman, you are treated as if you are worth nothing, even though Indian women support the economy of the country. They do the invisible jobs that allow middle class and even working class women to be in the job market, and that allow the men in their own families to be able to reproduce their energy and continue to be exploited on their jobs. Some of these women find "freedom" by coming to the U.S. to earn more money, and end up working 12 hours a day, often seven days a week.

—Greta

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

there when they need them, workers get mad and say to hell with what the boss thinks we will do.

In their rush to plan work to the bottom line they remind me of something my grandmother said, that they are penny wise and pound foolish. I think this can be said of capital with its internal need to plan all things more and more, the deeper the crises get. By planning they think they are putting the control on labor, but in this act the underlying revolt deepens.

The more they try to divide us by the plan or by the division of thinking from doing, the more there is in labor a hunger for universality or, as the philosopher Hegel said in his *Philosophy of Mind*, "The will is the immediate individuality self-instituted—an individuality, however, also purified of all that interferes with its universalism, i.e., with freedom itself."

The only answer for us to fight these things that capital throws at us is that internal need/movement for universality of labor. That is why workers need the form of a paper like News & Letters, where a dialogue on that needed universality can begin. A worker in the USA has more in common with their own "team," that of labor, whether it be USA, Britain, China, the world over, than with their rulers/bosses. Or, as Karl Marx put forth in the *Communist Manifesto*, workers unite, we have nothing to lose but our chains and a world to gain.

From the Archives of Marxist-Humanism

The Writings of
RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

Editor's note

We are proud to publish one of Raya Dunayevskaya's most important writings on dialectics on its 20th anniversary—"Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning," first presented as a speech to the Hegel Society of America meeting at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., in 1974. The talk developed the original concept "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning: The Ceaseless Movement of Ideas and History," articulated in her *Philosophy and Revolution* published the previous year, 1973. The lecture takes as its focus the final 27 paragraphs of Hegel's *Science of Logic* which comprise its final chapter, "The Absolute Idea."

While the section on the Absolute Idea remains the least commented upon by Marxists, the nature of the revolutionary dialectic presented in Hegel's *Logic* remains a crucial issue in Marxism. Lenin's reading of the Hegelian dialectic served as preparation for revolution, and Marx, who made constant returns to the Hegelian dialectic throughout his life, structured *Capital* along the lines of the notional concepts of the *Logic*.

Dunayevskaya's own constant returns to the Absolute Idea in Hegel's *Science of Logic* appear throughout *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development*. "Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning" itself appeared first in *New Essays* (News & Letters, Detroit: 1977), microfilm number 5631, and in *Art and Logic in Hegel's Philosophy*, Warren E. Steinkraus and Kenneth L. Schmitz, editors (Humanities Press: 1980), microfilm number 11535. Bracketed text here is by the editors.

"Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning" will be presented in two parts; the second part will appear in the November N&L. There Dunayevskaya's development of the "The Absolute Idea" through a battle of ideas includes critiques of contemporary Marxists like Theodor Adorno of the Frankfurt School and independent Czech philosopher Karel Kosik, as well as non-Marxist Hegel scholars like Reinhart Klemens Maurer and J.N. Findlay.

by Raya Dunayevskaya

Founder of Marxist-Humanism

In the beginning was the Word (*das ursprüngliche Wort*), not as a command, but as the philosophic utterance which vanishes into thin air. The release of the self-movement of the Absolute Idea unfolds, not as if it were in repose, but so totally infected with negativity that throughout the 27 paragraphs that constitute the final chapter of the *Science of Logic*, starting with the very first paragraph, we learn that the Absolute Idea contains "the highest opposition in itself" (*den höchsten Gegensatz in sich*). (*Science of Logic* or SL 824)¹

The dialectic would not be the dialectic and Hegel would not be Hegel if the moment of encounter with the Absolute Idea was a moment of quiescence. Thus, far from the unity of the Theoretical and Practical Idea being an ultimate, or pinnacle, of a hierarchy, the Absolute Idea is a new beginning, a new beginning that is inevitable precisely because the Absolute Idea is a "concrete totality" and thus entails differentiation and impulse to transcend. To follow Hegel, step by step, without for a single moment losing sight of negativity as the driving force toward ever-new beginnings, it may be best to divide the 27 paragraphs into three principal areas. The first three paragraphs, centering around that highest contradiction contained in the Absolute Idea at the very moment of the unification of the Theoretical and Practical Idea, shows its self-determination disclosing not a new content, but its universal form, the *Method*, that is, the dialectic.

Once Hegel asserts (in the fourth paragraph) that "*Notion is everything*, and its movement is the *universal absolute activity*, the self-determining and self-realizing movement," (SL 826) Hegel divides his field of concentration in what I call the second subdivision into two: a) paragraphs 5 to 7, stressing the new beginnings, immediacy that has resulted from mediation, and b) further opens the scope wider (paragraphs 8 to 15) as he sketches the development of the dialectic historically, from Plato to Kant, and differentiates his concept of second negativity as the

turning point of the movement of the Notion...the innermost source of all activity, of all animate and spiritual self-movement, the dialectical soul that everything true possesses and through which alone it is true; for on this subjectivity alone rests the sublation of the opposition between Notion and reality, and the unity that is truth. (SL 835)

The third subdivision I make covers the last 12 paragraphs. These disclose concreteness both in its totality and in each sphere, in each of which, as well as in the whole, inheres the impulse to transcend. And this includes the *system* itself. The intimation of totally new beginnings is not restricted to the fact that there will be other spheres and sciences Hegel plans to develop—Nature and Spirit. Inherent in these intimations are the consequences of what we will have been grappling with in the whole of the *Science of Logic*.

The Absolute Idea as new beginning, rooted in practice as well as in philosophy, is the burden of this writer's contribution. While this cannot be "proven" until the end of He-

gel's rigorous and yet free-flowing final chapter, it is necessary here, by way of anticipation, to call attention to the three final syllogisms in the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* which had not been included in the first edition of the work. To this writer, these crucial additions to the 1827 and 1830 editions constitute the summation, not alone of the *Encyclopaedia*, but of the whole cycle of knowledge and reality throughout the long tortuous trek of 2,500 years of Western civilization that that encyclopaedic

Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning

mind of genius, Hegel, was trying to bring to a conclusion. Just as the first of those syllogisms (*Encyclopaedia*, paragraph 575) shows that the *very center of its structure*—Logic, Nature, Mind—is not Logic but Nature, so does the very last paragraph in the *Science of Logic*.

Whether one conceives Nature as "externality" in the Hegelian sense, or "exteriority" in the Sartrean manner, or as "Practice" in Lenin's World War I view, the point is that Hegel, not Sartre, nor Lenin, conceives Nature as mediation. When I develop this further at the end of the paper, we shall see what illumination our age casts on the movement from practice that helps us in grappling with the dialectic. But here it is best to continue with the three central divisions I suggested:

(1) The same first paragraph of the Absolute Idea that riveted our attention to the highest opposition, cautioned against imposing an old quality on the new unity of opposites reached—the Theoretical and Practical Idea. "Each of these by itself is still one-sided." The new, the highest opposition, rather, has to self-develop: "The Notion is not merely *soul*, but free subjective Notion that is for itself and therefore possesses *personality*." This individuality is not "exclusive," but is "explicitly *universality* and *cognition*, and in its other, has *its own* objectivity for its object." (SL 824) All that needs to be done, therefore, is for the Absolute Idea "to hear itself speak," to "outwardize" (*Ausserung*). Its self-determination is its self-comprehension. Or, put more precisely, "its own completed totality" is not any new content. Rather it exists wholly as *form* and "the universal aspect of its form—that is, *method*." From that moment on Hegel will not take his mind's eye from the dialectic for, as he puts it, "nothing is known in its truth unless it is totally subject to method" (*als der Methode vollkommen unterworfen ist*).

(2) No less than 11 paragraphs follow the pronouncement that the Absolute form, the Method, the Notion is the whole. The pivot around which they all revolve, Hegel stresses over and over again, is the "*universal absolute activity*," the Method which "is therefore to be recognized as...unrestrictedly universal." (SL 826) In a word, this is not just another form of cognition; it is *the unity* of the Theoretical and Practical Idea we have reached. Far from being a "merely *external form*" or the instrument it is in inquiring cognition, the method is no "mere aggregate" of determinations but "the Notion that is determined in and for itself," the middle, the mediation, *because* it is objective and it is "posited in its identity," namely "subjective Notion." (SL 827)

To be swept up by the dialectic is to experience a plunge to freedom. Since, however, the rigor of thought cannot be allowed to dissolve into a "Bacchanalian revelry," it is necessary to work through these paragraphs without missing any links. The first is the beginning—the *Absolute as beginning*. When Hegel refers us to the very start of the Doctrine of Being—where he first posed the question "With What Must Science Begin?"—it is not for purposes of proving that the Absolute is a mere unfolding of what was implicit from the start, the manifestations. It also becomes a totally new foundation—absolute negation. Although from the beginning, Hegel emphasized that everything, no matter how simple it sounded, contained equally immediacy and mediation (SL 68), it is now so permeated with negativity that it is no mere remembrance of things past when Hegel writes, "There is nothing, whether in *actuality* or in *thought*, that is as simple and as abstract as is commonly imagined." (SL 829)

The long passageway through "concrete totality" of diverse, contradictory forces and relations from the Doctrine of Being through Essence to Notion makes it clear that though every beginning must be made *with the Absolute*, it becomes Absolute "only in its completion." It is *in* the movement to the transcendence of the opposition between Notion and Reality that transcendence will be achieved in subjectivity and subjectivity alone. In a word, this new beginning is both in thought and in actuality, in theory and practice, that is to say, in dialectical "*mediation*, which is more than a mere beginning, and is a mediation of a kind that does not belong to a comprehension by means of thinking." Rather "what is meant by it is in general the demand for the *realization of the Notion*, which realization does not lie in the *beginning* itself, but is rather the goal and the task of the entire further development of cognition." (SL 828)

Whether or not one follows Marx's "subversion"² of the Absolute's goal, the "realization of philosophy" as a "new Humanism," the unity of the ideal and the real, of theory and practice, indeed, of philosophy and revolution,³ one cannot fail to perceive Hegel's Absolute advance (*Weitergehen*) and "completion" as the conclusion and fulfillment, as the beginning anew from the Absolute, for he never departed

from conceiving all of history, of human development, not only as a history in the *consciousness* of freedom, but, as we shall see, as achievement in *actuality*. Even here, where Hegel limits himself strictly to philosophic categories, to his story of thought, he maintains the need to face reality. In tracing the conceptual breakthroughs of the dialectic from Plato to Kant to his own view of second negativity, he calls attention to Plato's demand of cognition "that it should *consider things in and for themselves*, that is, should consider them partly in their universality, but also that it should not stray away from them catching at circumstances, examples and comparisons." (SL 830)

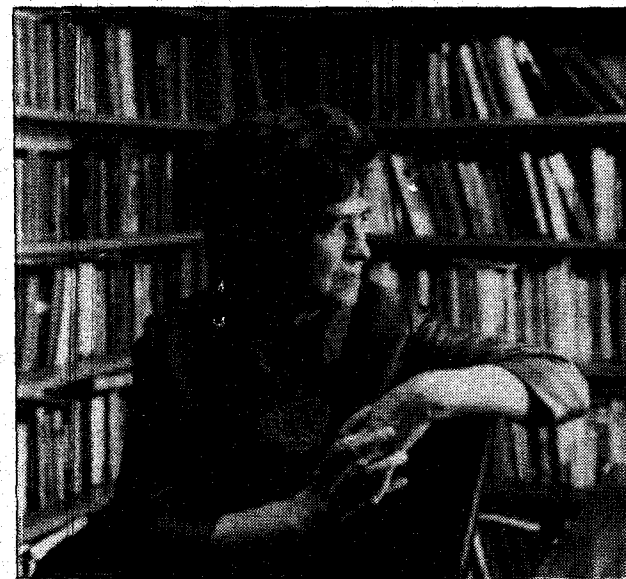
Considering things "in and for themselves," Hegel maintains, has made possible the working out of ever-new unities and relations between practice and theory. This is the achievement of Absolute Method. To whatever extent the method is analytic, to whatever extent synthetic as it exhibits itself as Other, the dialectic moment is not reached until (as the unity of the two) the "no less synthetic than analytic moment" determines itself as "the *other of itself*."

The point is that it is the power of the negative

which is the creative element. It is not the synthesis, but the absolute negativity which assures the advance movement. Since this is what separates Hegel from all other philosophers, and this philosophic ground, how a "universal first, considered in and for itself," shows itself to be the other of itself, this idea will dominate the last 12 paragraphs following the encounter with

the *turning point* of the movement of the Notion...the dialectical soul that everything true possesses and through which alone it is true; for on this subjectivity alone rests the sublation of the opposition between Notion and reality, and the unity that is truth. (SL 835)

Before, however, we go to those paragraphs developing second negativity to its fullest, I should like to retrace our steps to the threshold of the Absolute Idea, "The Idea of the Good," and call attention to the Russian Communist celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of Lenin's birth,



Raya Dunayevskaya, 1973

which coincided with Hegel's two hundredth. This will illuminate the problematic of our day. Academician Kedrov, Director of the Institute of History of Science and Technology, embarked on still another attempt to "disengage" Lenin from Hegel with the claim that the word, "alias," before the quotation, "Cognition not only reflects the world but creates it," shows Lenin was merely restating Hegel, not bowing to Hegel's "bourgeois idealism."⁴

The simple truth, however, is that the most revolutionary of all materialists, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, witnessing the simultaneity of the outbreak of World War I and the collapse of the Socialist International, felt compelled to return to Hegel's dialectic as that unity of opposites which might explain the counter-revolution within the revolutionary movement. Absolute negativity became Lenin's philosophic preparation for revolution, as Lenin's *Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic* shows.⁵ By the time his notes reach the Doctrine of the Notion, Lenin states that none of the Marxists (and the emphasis on the plural makes it clear he includes himself) had fully understood Marx's greatest theoretical work, *Capital*, "especially its first chapter" since that is impossible "without having thoroughly studied and understood the *whole* of Hegel's *Logic*."⁶ His passion at the approach of the Doctrine of the Notion—"NB Freedom = Subjectivity, ("or") End, Consciousness, Endeavor, NB"—had made it clear that Lenin at this time, 1914, saw in freedom,

(Continued on page 5)

1. The "SL" designation together with a number refers to the A.V. Miller translation of Hegel's *Science of Logic* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969).
2. Karl Lowith writes: "Marx takes over the task of the philosophy which ended with Hegel and puts revolutionary Marxism, as reason becoming practical, in the place of the whole previous tradition." Then Professor Lowith footnotes his comment by referring to Manfred Riedel's *Theorie und Praxis im denken Hegels* (Stuttgart: 1965). It is there, continues Lowith, "where it is established for the first time that, for Hegel, theory and practice share an equal primacy, since spirit as will is a will to freedom and freedom is the origin of all historical practice." This is from Lowith's "Mediation and Immediacy in Hegel, Marx and Feuerbach" in W.E. Steinkraus, ed. *New Studies in Hegel's Philosophy* (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc., 1971) page 122 and note.
3. See Chapter Two, "A New Continent of Thought, Marx's Historical Materialism and Its Inseparability from the Hegelian Dialectic," in my book, *Philosophy and Revolution* (New York: [Columbia University Press, 1989]).
4. See the article by Academician Kedrov printed in *Soviet Studies in Philosophy*, Summer 1970.

Hegel's Absolute

(Continued from page 4)

in subjectivity, notion, the categories with which both to transform the world and to gain knowledge of the objectively real **because** he had already, in the Doctrine of Essence, recognized, in Hegel's critique of causality, the limitation of "science" to explain the relation between mind and matter.

Lenin then proceeded to grapple with the role of practice in Hegel, especially when Hegel writes of the Practical Idea as having "not only the dignity of the Universal, but also the simply actual." Lenin's quotation about cognition that the Communists are presently trying to expunge is significant, **not** because he accords such "creativity" to cognition but rather because Lenin, in "granting" that creativity to cognition, had followed it up by calling attention to the fact that Hegel had used the word Subject "here suddenly instead of 'Notion.'" And to make matters still worse for those Russian epigoni, it was all in the sentence about "the self-certainty which the subject has in the fact of its determinateness in and for itself, a certainty of its own actuality and the **non-actuality** of the world."

Vulgar materialists are so utterly shocked at Lenin writing about the "non-actuality of the world" and the "self-certainty of the Subject's actuality" that they quote, not Hegel, as Lenin did, but Lenin's "translation": "i.e., that the world does not satisfy man and man decides to change it by his activity." But the point is that, after that "translation," Hegel is quoted in full, on the contrast between inquiring cognition where "this actuality appeared merely as an objective world, without the subjectivity of the Notion, and here it appears as an objective world whose inner ground and actual subsistence is the Notion. This is the Absolute Idea." (SL 823)

It is this appreciation of the Absolute Idea, not as something in heaven or in the stratosphere, but in fact in the objective world whose very ground is the Notion, that has statist Communism so worried about Lenin, ever since the East German Revolt of June 17, 1953, and the emergence of a movement from practice to theory and a new society. They have rightly sensed that Lenin's break with his own philosophic past of the photocopy theory of reality plus voluntarism produced the Great Divide in the Movement that has yet to run its course.⁸

Continued next month

5. This is my own translation which was published as an Appendix to my *Marxism and Freedom* (New York: 1958). However I am cross-referencing here the "official" translation which was published out of context, in 1961, as "Conspicuous of Hegel's Book *The Science of Logic*" in Lenin's *Collected Works*, Volume 38. See also footnote numbered 221 on page 317 of my *Philosophy and Revolution* for evidence of the interest Lenin displayed in the study of Hegel by Professor Ilyin who was then sitting in jail for opposing the Bolshevik revolution, and whom Lenin freed. The reference to this in the Archives of the Lenin Institute for the year 1921, was included in Russian, only in the first publication of Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks*, specifically in the Introduction by Deborin.
6. Lenin, *Philosophic Notebooks*, page 180.
7. *Philosophic Notebooks*, page 213.
8. Elsewhere I have developed more fully the ramifications and break in Lenin's philosophic development. See Chapter Three, "The Shock of Recognition and the Philosophic Ambivalence of Lenin" in my *Philosophy and Revolution*, pages 95-120.

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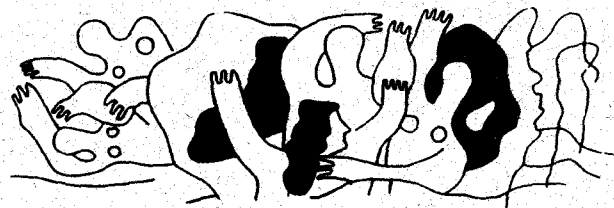
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Bosnia arms embargo 'deadline' is put off

Chicago—As we go to press, Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic seems to have agreed, under great pressure from the United States, France, Britain and Russia, to postpone the Oct. 15 date for the lifting of the arms embargo on his besieged nation. This provides yet one more way for Clinton to avoid serious conflict with his allies over Bosnia policy. So as the military band plays at the White House, an unctuous Clinton embraces a sneering Yeltsin, and Sarajevo continues to suffer a tightening stranglehold as one more winter of war approaches.

While all eyes have been focused on Haiti, "ethnic



Vaclav Havel and the crisis in post-modernism

We are going through a transitional period, when it seems that something is on the way out and something else is painfully being born. It is as if something were crumbling, decaying and exhausting itself, while something else, still indistinct, were arising from the rubble.

—Vaclav Havel, Philadelphia, July 4, 1994

Vaclav Havel's American Independence Day speech echoes Hegel's famous depiction of our epoch as a "birth-time and period of transition." The speech describes a new sense of foreboding and disarray felt in today's post-modernist intellectual milieu. Havel, the former revolutionary dissident who is now President of the Czech Republic, challenges humanity to create "a new model of co-existence among the various cultures, peoples, races and religious spheres within a single interconnected civilization." Havel recognizes that post-modernism's obsessive opposition to universals doesn't help face the real world's pervasive crises.

The present day horror of "cultural conflicts" which "are more dangerous today than at any other time in history" impels Havel's search for new universals to help "new meaning be born" in an age that is "crumbling, decaying, and exhausting itself." Havel sees the "multicultural era" as identical with its opposite, "a signal that an amalgamation of cultures is taking place." This causes humans to "cling to the ancient certainties of their tribe."

Never has each one of us and each culture been so thoroughly integrated in a global division of labor, in a unitary commodity culture. At the same time the sentiment has never been stronger for viewing the world as made up of isolated individuals and many separate, purely distinct cultures. Even radicalism is often equated with a turn inward to one's identity while the goals of mass movement are being limited to democracy within the framework of capitalist commodity culture.

Havel isn't "shedding an intellectual tear over the commercial expansion of the West that destroys alien cultures." He is crying over alienation that has come from within this new unitary world. For him this alienation is not that of the laborer who faces the constant introduction of science and technology as a weapon to more completely dominate or eliminate the live human being. His concern is not with the worker being restructured out of a job or the peasant in Chiapas or China being "freed" from any way to make a living in this new globally integrated capitalism. Alienation for Havel is "science as the basis of the modern conception of the world" wherein "man as observer is becoming completely alienated from himself as being."

Havel sees hope in science revealing its limits at "the moment it begins to appear we are deeply connected to the entire universe" and "science...returned in a round-

* See "The New Measure of Man," New York Times, 7/8/94.

Quebec elections

(Continued from page 1)

peoples' prior land claim to large areas of the province is dealt with. Canadian federalists are more than happy to "play the indigenous card," i.e., to rush (cynically) to the defense of Quebec's native peoples and thereby frustrate Quebec nationalism and take the moral high ground on native issues at the same time.

In all of this no one has yet come forward with real answers to the problems of unemployment, under employment, the rollback of wages, employee benefits and once sacrosanct social programs, and the growing impoverishment of large sectors of the population in both Quebec and the rest of Canada. Certainly *not* Canada's so-called socialist New Democratic Party (NDP), whose regressive rule in three Canadian provinces has mirrored that of the Liberals and Tories (in Ontario the "labour-friendly" NDP has attacked public sector workers in a way that no mainstream party would have dared).

The retrogression of the times is deep, and the struggle to recognize and transform the decaying structure of capitalism continues at the street level and awaits the smallest sign of enlightened political leadership.

—Canadian activist

cleansing" has reached its most intense level in at least a year with thousands of Muslims driven from their homes in the northern areas of Bosnia. Anyone who is under the illusion that Clinton is about helping the Haitians need only look at how he has helped the Bosnians.

Under these circumstances, it was a very moving experience to hear a voice from Sarajevo like that of Nada Selimovic of the Center for Anti-War Activities there. She told how her group was trying to collect data on the many war crimes committed in the genocidal march toward Greater Serbia by Milosevic and Karadzic, and of how the Center's offices have twice been destroyed by shelling. Because they stand for a multi-ethnic society they are also a prime target.

Most important, Nada called for the lifting of the arms embargo, as well as prosecution of war criminals. But rather than heeding a voice like that of Nada Selimovic, citizen of Sarajevo and the world, Clinton now prefers to bargain away lives while he lifts the sanctions on—Serbia.

—Gerard Emmett

about way, to man...offers him his lost integrity." For Havel that means a new form of worship of nature in the "Gaia hypothesis" where the earth is viewed as a single living "mega-organism."

Doesn't today's reality demand a new look at Marx's re-creation of Hegel's dialectic of spirit for the capitalist epoch? Marx posed, not a "roundabout," but a direct return of humanity to itself out of the commodity fetish and its false concept of objectivity, which includes that of the "observer" of science. Because past forms were themselves dissolved by capitalist alienation, a return to self can't be merely to a new version of the tribal world's "ancient worship of nature" or "the immaturity of man as an individual."

However, what Marx singled out in the struggle of so-called "alien cultures" against their dissolution, was not the opposition of a static entity, but an encouragement for all humanity to gain a higher form of conscious life. Marx saw all movement through a view of objectivity based not on relations between things but on humanity freely taking responsibility for the objective spiritual existence that shapes material life and impacts nature. There is no shortcut to such responsibility. It can only come through a free association of laborers and the development of the total individual.

—Ron Brokmeyer

Urban revolt in Iran

Another urban rebellion broke out in Iran in the city of Qazvin in August. A protest rally in front of the home of Qazvin's religious leader became a demonstration by 30,000 people. When police fired on the crowds they responded by surrounding the police station and burning it down. Then they broke into stores and banks, burning down government buildings. According to Mojahedeen, 750 buildings were burned down or attacked.

What triggered the demonstrations was the rejection by the Majlis (national assembly) of a bill to secede Qazvin from the Zanjan province and attach it to Teheran province. Throughout Iran, geographic divisions reflect attempts by the government, pre- and post-revolution, to take away local political power. Qazvin is a city of nearly 3/4 million people, located about 100 miles from Teheran. It is an important commercial and agricultural center. The minister of internal affairs was booed out of town. Next he announced on the radio that Qazvin is part of Teheran. But the demonstrators continued, chanting "neither Zanjan, nor Teheran—*independence, independence.*"

The city was surrounded by armed forces. The newly formed Baseej forces were sent in. Tens of thousands of Baseejis occupied the city, standing in groups, 50 feet apart. The next day they began their own street march in support of the regime. Several papers attacked the fact that the regime surrendered to the demands for a change of status of Qazvin warning that "today's protest might become tomorrow's norm" and lead to many more clashes in the future all over the country.

—Cyrus Noveen

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THE REVOLUTIONARY MIND OF THE HAITIAN MASSES

Aristide's character assassination and the Right's opposition to intervention reveals that xenophobia is inner xenophobia, America's deep-rooted racism. This contradictory content is elided in Clinton's intervention, democracy being "ordinary" in spite of its contradictions, democracy as the only alternative. The unrecognized contradiction is the self-determination of the Black masses, American and Haitian, against the abstraction of democracy. Aristide, despite his own ambivalence, is the symbol of the Haitian masses, thus the ruler's ambivalence toward him. However, what distinguishes abstract (Left) from concrete, revolutionary opposition to the rulers is no mere recognition of the basic fact of Blackness, but to begin to draw the Idea of freedom that rises ever upward from the Haitian masses.

Steven
California

* * *

It looks to me as though the U.S. only invades Black countries. Look at Panama, Somalia and Grenada—but nobody invaded Bosnia. There they just prevented the Muslims from defending themselves.

Reader
Los Angeles

* * *

Why couldn't they let the Haitians voice their opinion? What are they scared of? Here, in the U.S., you have freedom of speech sometimes, but sometimes not. When you tell them what they want to hear it's all right, but when you tell them something they don't want to hear you don't have that right.

Latino youth
Chicago

* * *

As should be evident from the way it has given vent to some of the most open expressions of racism this country has seen in years, the right-wing attack on Clinton's Haiti policy has nothing whatsoever to do with the caution many Aristide supporters have expressed in recent weeks. Gingrich's open racism and classism doesn't have to do with Haiti but with this country and the L.A. rebellion two years ago. It can have far-reaching conclusions.

Philosophy professor
Illinois

* * *

I read that some of the soldiers who witnessed the beating of the coconut peddler in Haiti the day after the U.S. had arrived said "it was like watching the beating of Rodney King." It's exactly the way I had felt seeing it on TV. I'm sure that angry reaction of the GIs—a lot of whom come from impoverished U.S. backgrounds and are in the Army because it's the only job they could find—worried the U.S. military as much as the "riot" (read: rebellion).

Waiting here too
Chicago

* * *

Jesse Helms praised the Mexican election results but says Aristide, who won

70% of the vote in Haiti, doesn't deserve to be in power. They want to undermine Aristide because of his ideas. They'll let him return only with his ideas diminished. That's what the invasion is for, but it may turn out to give breathing room for people to do the type of work that will let ideas flourish.

Latino worker
Los Angeles

* * *

The Haitian youth rap group that said they didn't want "an embargo on our minds" put it eloquently for the Haitian masses.

Black revolutionary
California

•

RELIGION AND THE RIGHT

There is a very large bloc in the ruling class of this country that sees American racism as a way to win the next election. Every time I see the "Christian coalition" in action and the organized way they are working for conservative candidates like Quayle, I think of the Goldwater election back in 1964, when that open-shop segregationist won the Republican primary in California after the Republican Party was captured by the 1960s fanatics, the Birchites. The November elections bear studied watching.

Worried
Illinois

* * *

The Republican right-wing Congressman, Henry Hyde, has built a career on denying poor women their Constitutional right to abortions by banning Medicaid funding through the infamous Hyde Amendment. And last year he enraged Black women lawmakers in the House with his racist attack on pro-choice supporters, saying "We'll give you a free abortion because there are too many of you people and we want to refine the breed." Does anyone still have illusions about the Catholic Church's attitude toward women when he was the one named "Catholic American of the Year" this year?

M.J.G.
Chicago

* * *

I was incensed when I read about the 19-year-old woman in Florida who, not having enough money to pay for an abortion—between \$1,300 and \$1,800 for a 20-week pregnancy—was charged with murder for shooting herself in the stomach in a desperate attempt to abort the fetus. This young woman has a three-year-old son, was unable to find work and was living with her grandmother who she feared would not accept another child. The third-degree murder charge comes from the death of the fetus. This legal torture of women desperate to control their own bodies has got to stop. If we had a human response to unwanted pregnancies instead of the degenerate Hyde Amendment cutting off Federal funds for abortions for poor women, this tragedy wouldn't have happened. This is a case we need to follow and protest to make sure nothing like it ever happens again.

Women's Liberationist
Chicago

WHY READ NEWS & LETTERS ?

News & Letters is a sight for sore eyes. I'm enclosing postage for sample copies for four friends along with my own subscription. I'm a non-denominational Marxist in central Indiana. The Committees of Correspondence is the only leftist group here. We wish you wouldn't criticize it so bitterly. We're fighting behind enemy lines here. If you unleash your aggression against the racist Right, more progress will be made.

Non-Stalinist grad student
Indiana

* * *

I just drove across the country, and my impression is that, more than ever, we need the strong, independent, revolutionary voice of N&L. Cynicism, the limits of the possible and anti-intellectualism are running rampant. They are being reinforced by a lowest-common-denominator media circus. We must all try, from whatever liberatory perspectives

possible, to project an exhilaratingly human future.

Women's liberationist professor
Irvine, Cal.

* * *

Marx said something to the effect that philosophy has its place but the need is to change society. I agree with Lenin and Trotsky, a Democratic-Centralist Party is needed. But here's my renewal and a name to send a sample copy.

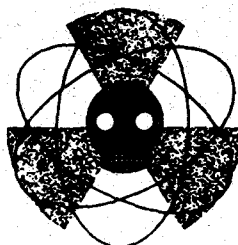
Long-time radical
Philadelphia

* * *

Most left groups that I have come in contact with don't say what they stand for. They only ask you to participate in activities with them. What I like about the Marxist-Humanists is that you say what your philosophy is, and you are constantly rethinking questions.

Chicana youth
Chicago

Readers' Views



ENVIRONMENT AND GLOBAL CATASTROPHE

We are poisoning our whole environment and ourselves at an alarming rate. Agriculture has been turned into "Agrobusiness." To speed up the weight gain of various animals and their "productivity," animals are fed and injected with all kind of hormones and growth-enhancing products. Because of the totally unhealthy and crowded conditions in which domestic animals are kept, they are prone to mass infections. To counteract it heavy doses of antibiotics are fed to them which also end up in our daily food. As if all that is not enough, the tobacco industry provides nicotine addiction and lung cancer. If we add to this the doubling the world's population in the next 15-20 years parallel with the destruction of ecological systems and pollution of the whole environment, we have the scenario for a global catastrophe. All of it contributes to the feeling of hopelessness and impotence permeating our society.

L. Gati
British Columbia

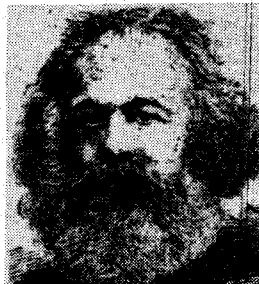
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In northern California, 97% of the original two million acres of old growth ancient redwoods have been successfully destroyed by Pacific Lumber Company and more recently, with more rapidity, Maxxam Corp. The remaining 5,000 acres of forest, being "unprotected," are in danger of being completely clear cut, notably as a means to pay back Maxxam Corp.'s \$864 million of junk bond debts!

In Congress, the "Headwaters Forest Act" has been introduced with lobbying by environmental groups against the total destruction of the forest. With the law (Maxxam Corp. supports the bill), the "protected" forest will be a means to remind humanity of its certain perverse but inexorable "nature."

Environmentalist youth
Los Angeles

MARX AND MARIATEGUI



It's a very hard thing to pose a close relationship between Marx and Mariategui as Eugene Walker did in his essay in the August-September issue. He said that it's not that the two said the same things but that it's the "spirit" of their efforts that brings them together for us today, when we have such weighted questions facing us. But what does that mean?

Can we really say that this great Peruvian "re-created" Marxism on native soil? That word "re-creation" is a very big question. Didn't Raya Dunayevskaya discuss a lot of great thinkers who nevertheless failed to re-create the dialectic? What I liked about the essay was that it suggests we can discuss the nature of Marx's relationship to subjects of revolt by looking at what Mariategui did. But can "discovering a new Subject of revolution" be as different an experience as Marx, 1844, and Mariategui in the 1920s? The author brought the two together, but did Mariategui? Did he bring 1844 up to the 1920s?

Mitch Weerth
Bay Area

PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE

The Left is just as confused here in Puerto Rico as in the U.S. The various "Marxisms" that try to dominate discussion of social change here see Cuba as their model, all the more since the fall of the Soviet bloc. They are still obsessed with state power and usually fall into a narrow nationalism which views "inde-

pendence" from the U.S. as an end in itself. I support independence as a means to a revolutionary end. I view the Caribbean as potentially one country, one archipelago with a multi-ethnic and multi-language population.

As against Castro and the deformation of the revolution, I support the revolutionary process in Cuba, the people's movement, and think the embargo should cease. It's a stupid policy and hypocritical especially in light of Haiti. The Chiapas insurrection proves the revolutionary capacity of the peasantry and indigenous peoples, which Marx pointed out in his last decade, as underlined by his Ethnological Notebooks.

Caribbean correspondent
Puerto Rico



THE CRIME OF PRISON

Because of the crime bill and "three strikes you're out," they'll have to build a lot of prisons and waste a lot of money. It's all going to come from the taxpayers, so the people will end up losing, especially with cops like a couple in my neighborhood who pin people for no reason. They grab you out of the street, show you drugs and say, "These are yours, and you're going to jail." All the real criminals are downtown working in suits. Instead of going after the big guy, they're going after the guy on the street trying to make a buck to stay alive. Putting more people in jail will make things worse. When they take me to jail, I don't think about what I did wrong because I didn't do anything wrong. I just think about getting out.

Latino youth
Chicago

* * *

I want you to know how much I enjoyed the issues of N&L I've seen, and so did the other prisoners I've shared them with. If you are interested I can send you information to publish on HIV and AIDS. Are you aware that prisoners with AIDS have a life expectancy half that of people in the free world, and the transmission rate is a lot higher? In New York prisons at least one in six are infected. In Texas it's about one in 15. I'd like to change this sad statistic by any means necessary.

Prisoner
Texas

* * *

Today there is a lot of crime and it is combined with a lack of work. If people had the opportunity to do something with their lives, there wouldn't be all the crime we see. What do they expect people to do without a future? Roll over? People keep trying to get something out of life. They don't really give up.

Black worker
Decatur, Ill.

•

WORKING TOWARD WELFARE?

The corporations in the U.S. want all of us to be immigrants, to work for \$4 an hour, 50 hours a week. They reap the harvest and we get the crumbs. And unless the unions stand up, benefits will be a thing of the past.

Staley worker
Decatur, Ill.

* * *

I know what you mean about working people needing welfare in Mississippi. We had a couple of workers at the Caterpillar Decatur plant who were eligible for a certain amount of assistance. They were working for \$7.50 an hour on Caterpillar's two-tier wage system.

Production worker
Morton, Ill.

* * *

The capitalist class glorifies suffering. They don't care how much they punish you. No matter how much work you do, you'll never satisfy them. If the capitalists take over heaven, I won't go there—I don't want to be anywhere near them.

Retired auto worker
Detroit

1844: NEW CONTINENT OF THOUGHT AND REVOLUTION

Perhaps, like Axel Honneth's recently published *Critique of Power*, it will become a new fashion among some circles concerned with "critical theory" to do a book of several hundred pages with either only passing reference to Marx, or none at all. Hence, we certainly need a celebration of the 150th anniversary of Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Essays of 1844*, such as appeared in N&L last month. It has me reflecting on the fact that, though I have studied Dunayevskaya's work for a while, I had assumed, up to reading her essay in celebration of 1844, that Marx's "transcendence of and return to Hegel's dialectic" referred only to Marx's later writings in relationship to his earlier. Seeing that the transcendence of, and return to, the Hegelian dialectic occurred first within the 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" renewed for me the power of the "actual birth of a new world concept."

Victor Hart
New York

A number of scholars—Cornel West, for example, and others with a bent to a so-called "new pragmatism"—have singled out Marx's 1844 Essays to show what they consider to be Marx's turn away from philosophy. Dunayevskaya argues from the opposite point of view, saying they represent a new concept of philosophy. The question is whether there was something in the nature of Marx's critique that would allow him to remain Hegelian or whether the critique of Hegelian philosophy represents "the end of philosophy" that today's epigones talk so much about. Central to this question is the very notion of Humanism: what categories central to Hegel's dialectic led to Marx arriving at a "thoroughgoing naturalism" or "new Humanism."

Black intellectual
Chicago

It may seem like a small point, but I do not believe the title, "Karl Marx's Economic and Philosophic Essays of 1844," to announce Raya Dunayevskaya's writing published in the August-

September issue, was true to what Dunayevskaya always tried to convey about these writings. Marx never gave a title to them, but Dunayevskaya referred to them as "Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts." I don't believe the use of a hyphen rather than an "and" was accidental. Dunayevskaya was arguing that Marx's new world view would brook no separation between philosophy and economics. A number of Dunayevskaya's original categories in her philosophic work were such a jamming together of words to help bring forth new ways of thinking about concepts. Two that come to mind are "state-capitalism" and "Marxist-Humanism."

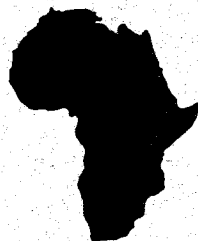
Eugene Walker
Oregon

There are two important things this Archives writing helps us do. One is to grasp the process of creation of Marx's philosophic moment that he continued to develop for the rest of his life. The other is to show us the process of development of Dunayevskaya's thought. I am not familiar with anyone else who dealt with the Essays in a way that lets us "hear Marx think." It is what Dunayevskaya also did in her study of his *Ethnological Notebooks* at the end of his life.

Revolutionary environmentalist
Illinois

There are a number of new discussions underway concerning the relevance of the Marxian concept of socialism for today's world arguing that Marx's concept of socialism is no longer fully relevant. What seems to be missing in these discussions is what you have been focusing on—the cogency of the dialectic of second negativity, as found in Marx's *Humanist Essays of 1844*. It's unfortunate that the 150th anniversary of these Essays has not elicited broader rethinking in the Left. It makes it all the more important for *News & Letters* to have something to say about these ongoing debates.

F.L.
Illinois

THE
AFRICAN
LEFT

The situation in Africa is challenging for the Left. The marginalization of the African masses is creating a new political arena. It seems very dark now when the African Left seems to be drowning, as the recent Pan-Africanist Congress, its declarations and resolutions give clear evidence. But a mature Left has a chance to emerge from this crisis.

In the Gambia the military has taken over state power and the Left has rejected all offers from the military dictators, who are now on the offensive against the Left with a decree which reads: "All political parties shall cease to exist and no person shall assemble or associate for the purpose of forming a political party or engaging in any political activities." Activists from a left organization called PDOTS are now awaiting trial under this decree. The hope is that this new situation will bring the Left together for a more mature and militant struggle.

Ba Karang
West Africa

CHINA, NIGERIA AND
MARX'S MARXISM

There is nothing wrong with the communism of Marx. What is wrong is the generation of leaders who made of communism a way to get privileges for themselves and their families and have no concern for the average people, and you will find there a tremendous anger against these leaders. The worst is Li Peng. He is one who came up in the center of power and has no relation to average people. When we, the students, confronted him in Tiananmen Square in 1989, he did not even know how to answer us, he is stupid. If you go to China, Russia, Cuba, you will find many people with this idea, that there is nothing

wrong with the original idea of communism, the problem is what these leaders made of it.

Chinese exile
New York

N&L has been of tremendous assistance to our political groups for gaining a new perspective on Marxism and on the resurgence of socialist politics in this part of the world. Humanism is an entirely new school/tendency in the Marxist movement which answers some of the questions we have been asking. The movement we inherited here was too structural/structuralist, almost lifeless. We asked why democracy and humanism were missing and were told these were petit-bourgeois ideas. Now we see that historically and theoretically we are not alone.

Marxist
Nigeria

INDEPENDENCE UNDER PQ

The Parti Quebecois (PQ) victory in the Sept. 12 election is probably more of a "throw the bums out" vote than one for independence from Canada. Independence under the PQ would be living hell. It is no longer the populist party it once was. It has become increasingly xenophobic, anti-labor, authoritarian and yuppified. Conditions for the Amerindians of Quebec, already deteriorating with the 22-year-long James Bay hydroelectric project and the incredible violence against the Mohawks in the summer of 1990, are sure to worsen in an independent Quebec. The PQ is openly racist against the Amerindians, especially since the very presence of the Amerindians challenges the mystical narrow nationalist concept of "rights to the land." I also fear for the well-being of recent immigrants and of long-established English-speaking Quebecois. On the other hand, to be French Canadian still means second-class citizenship in Canada, and some of the pro-PQ vote reflects genuine outrage at this condition.

Former Montrealeur
Oakland, Cal.

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Editorial

Unholy war at UN Conference

Meeting in Cairo, Egypt, under threat of death from Islamic fundamentalist fanatics, the 20,000 attendees from 150 nations at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) ended up battling the unholy alliance of the Pope and Islamic fundamentalists over the very ground of the conference. From Sept. 5-13 and even before, the Vatican led in spouting the big lie: that the ICPD was supposedly a forum for "cultural imperialism" run by the U.S. and "Western feminists" who were pushing a pro-abortion agenda, while the Pope, et al., were for development.

The opposite was the truth. The ICPD revealed to the world the daily struggles and determination of poverty-stricken women from hundreds of countries and every continent to take control of their lives—from deciding when and how to have children, to the struggle to end poverty and get an education. In fact, it was women activists—particularly those in the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO)—who had demanded that the word "development" be in the Conference title. That was why the Pope tried to divert the attention of the entire Conference to the Church's twisted concept of morality and anti-abortion, anti-abortion, anti-abortion.

The question of abortion is, indeed, central as Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland of Norway made clear, declaring to thunderous applause: "Morality becomes hypocrisy if it means accepting mothers...dying in connection with unwanted pregnancies and illegal abortions, and unwanted children living in misery.... Decriminalizing abortion should therefore be a minimal response to this reality."

What was gnawing at Brundtland and the 1,000 NGOs that had so much to do with making women's freedom central to the Conference was the horrible reality of 200,000 women dying in agony every year from illegal botched back-alley abortions—two million women dead since the last population conference, whose guiding document the Vatican refused to sign.

CAPITALISM STULTIFIES DEVELOPMENT

The super-conciliatory Vice President Al Gore and the self-congratulatory U.S. Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs, Timothy Wirth, were only too happy to fall into the Vatican's trap. While Gore sold women's right to abortion down the river even before the ICPD began, Wirth tried to make the U.S. government look like the great champion of women's rights.

How far that is from the truth is seen even in the U.S. government's refusal to allow a sentence recognizing "the right to family reunification," insisting it be replaced by the pusillanimous phrase that governments make efforts to "enhance the integration of the children of long-term migrants." This argument over a half sentence shows that beneath the self-serving rhetoric about development lies the fact that the U.S. economy is in such shambles that it can't even meet the needs of its own population.

That, in fact, is an essential part of capitalism's law of motion: the creation of a "surplus" population that capital is incapable of employing. This inability to create real development elicits new demands from those capitalism has marked for poverty.

WOMEN PURSUE THEIR OWN GROUND

What the delegates came to discuss is seen in the "Statement on Poverty, Development and Population Activities" prepared by the U.S. Women of Color Delegation to the ICPD. They rejected the notion "that women's reproductive capacity is to blame for poverty," and looked at "rural America" to point to "the root causes of poverty...[as] lack of access to land, credit, markets, education, and training." They saw their participation as "a chance to...rectify the inconsistencies and inequities which have arrested development and entrenched poverty for marginalized groups in the U.S. and abroad."

That the ICPD fell far short of what women were demanding is clear from the fact that the final document is non-binding, and almost 65% of the funding is ear-

marked for contraception while only 28% will go for reproductive health. And all the other questions of real development—ending poverty, land redistribution, education, new relations between men and women—got only lip service.

It is the determination for self-development, to become whole human beings, that marks our age. Women have been fighting for that concept of development from Latin



Egyptian Muslim women protest inclusion of anti-abortion slogans at prayer meeting at conference.

America to Africa and from Asia to the USA and nowhere more profoundly this year than in Chiapas. There, even before the revolt, Zapatista women declared the "Women's Revolutionary Law" in March 1993 that not only stated women's right to decide when and how many children to have, but proclaimed: "Women, regardless of their race, creed, color or political affiliation, have the right to participate in the revolutionary struggle in a way determined by their desire and capacity." It was the fight for full human development, and therefore implicitly for revolution, that was the fuel smoldering beneath the ICPD.

Fighting the Right in Oregon

Portland, Or.—This November Oregonians will again have the "opportunity" to vote on whether to deny legal protections to gays and lesbians. This year's Ballot Measure Thirteen and the infamous Ballot Measure Nine in 1992 have been sponsored by a fundamentalist Christian right-wing group misleadingly called the Oregon Citizens Alliance (OCA). The OCA is attempting to make unconstitutional in Oregon any legal protections against discrimination for gays and lesbians. The OCA also wants to prohibit using taxpayer funds for anything it deems "promotion" of homosexuality.

As someone who has been an Oregon resident for over 20 years now, who is also a lesbian, who is also a teacher at a community college, I don't find this an abstract, academic issue. A literature class, for example, read *The Color Purple*, by Alice Walker. Since the book contains a lesbian relationship, I told the students that if Measure Nine had passed, *The Color Purple* would have been illegal in a school setting. Or conceivably, I could have taught it if I condemned the relationship between two women characters which is central to the novel.

As an employee of the college, my union contract contains sexual orientation in its nondiscrimination clause. The college includes sexual orientation in its nonharassment policy. Both these types of protection would have been wiped out if Measure Nine had passed, and Measure Thirteen would likely have the same effect.

The sophisticated and tricky language of OCA ballot measures suggests the influence of right-wing think tanks. Measure Thirteen, for example, is titled the "Minority Status and Child Protection Act." With "minority status" the OCA plays on people's fears of affirmative action and "special rights." With "child protection" the OCA seeks to exploit the stereotype of gays as child molesters from whom children need to be protected.

My partner and I were foot soldiers in the fight against Measure Nine. We polled voters, went door to door with information to counteract the lies the OCA was putting out. Huge numbers of citizens from all backgrounds were involved in the fight against Measure Nine. I remember one rally in downtown Portland. Ten thousand people absolutely jammed the square.

Many people, myself included, feel tired of fighting what seems like an endless battle just for the right to potentially have what should be protections against discrimination. I hear some saying: Even if Measure Thirteen passes, the courts would wipe it out, as they did with Measure Eight, which attempted to strike down civil rights protection based on sexual orientation for employees in the executive branch of Oregon government.

I am convinced that it's essential to keep fighting the right. In Oregon the OCA has gotten members elected to school boards and has taken control of the state Republican party. To say something is just a "gay issue" seems, on one level, to trivialize it. It seems to me that the OCA and similar groups represent a kind of fascism, the attempt to institutionalize one political view as the only correct one. The OCA and some other right-wing groups are rising to power by appealing to hate, just as Hitler did.

The OCA and similar groups must be fought and fought hard. Ballot Measure Thirteen in Oregon is one example of a fascist-type political maneuver which must be defeated.

—Sara Edelstein

Profits from poisoned meat

Recent deaths from a deadly strain of *E. coli* bacteria carried by beef are the latest pretext the nuclear industry and its allies have seized upon in their campaign for food irradiation. This industry, reeling from the cancellation of every U.S. reactor ordered since 1974 plus the early deterioration of older reactors, seeks to find a new life for itself on the domestic scene under the guise of food safety. Allied with it is the meat industry, looking for a high-tech, low-labor solution to its image problem.

Far from being a quick fix, technology relates to food safety in a contradictory way. Where and how it is developed and applied tells a great deal about a society. In agriculture as in all businesses, production technology has been transformed rapidly and frequently, while safety technology lags far behind.

The modern factory farm is as mechanized as possible. Livestock are raised in cramped, crowded, unsanitary—and quite inhumane—conditions that promote the spread of bacteria and viruses. Diseases are controlled through the least labor-intensive medical technology: drugs, which tend to breed drug-resistant pathogens. Often, chicken feed is highly contaminated with salmonella and rodent control is neglected.

These conditions are the result of capitalism's drive to get the maximum production out of the minimum number of workers. For the same reason, kill lines at slaughterhouses are run so fast that workers report it is impossible to keep cattle guts from splattering on the meat—and on the workers themselves.

At the same time, the concentration of capital is manifested not only in greater numbers of animals being raised together and slaughtered together, but greater amounts of meat being stored together and transported together—the dirty contaminating the clean.

Compared to the investments in mechanizing husbandry and meatpacking, and in drugging and genetically engineering livestock, almost nothing has been invested in ensuring the safety of workers and consumers. The Government Accounting Office reports that federal meat inspectors are overworked and equipped with antiquated technology.

The simple expedient of slowing the production line would allow cleaner conditions and reduce the strain on workers at risk of injuries like carpal tunnel syndrome. That is one thing meatpacking workers have been fighting for. (See "Poisonous Profits," March 1993 N&L.)

But to the capitalist such a solution is unthinkable. A high-tech solution is preferred, even if it means more radioactive waste, more chance of nuclear accidents, more unknown chemicals in our food.

In short, the proposed solution is dangerous because it is another manifestation of the way technology is shaped by the drive to exploit labor. To point out the folly of food irradiation is good, but not good enough. It is essential for environmental struggles against the inhuman use of technology to align with labor struggles for the human control of technology and of the production process in which it is used.

—Franklin Dmitryev

Legacy of Stonewall

New York City—"Becoming Visible: The Legacy of Stonewall," the exhibition on New York gay and lesbian history at the Public Library, broke the library's attendance records, attracting 17,258 the week of the 25th anniversary of Stonewall and 1,000 a day all summer.

You enter the exhibition and are surrounded by images of the Stonewall Rebellion and its immediate aftermath, and you can pick up the receiver of one of several pay telephones to listen to taped oral histories of participants in the 1969 rebellion. Then you swing backwards in time to decades before 1969 and encounter evidence of rich gay, lesbian and bisexual culture before Stonewall.

What got to me most was the blue—or dishonorable—discharge from a gay serviceman in World War II. At least 5,000 gay men received these blue papers by 1946, making them ineligible for any G.I. Bill benefits. The Brooklyn man whose discharge is displayed is still a messenger, as he was before the war, because of his blue discharge.

I found especially interesting the section on political groups in the 1950s and '60s. The exhibit included photographs of a tiny demonstration at the army induction center in New York in 1964 by the Homosexual League of New York and the League for Sexual Freedom, and picketing at the White House in 1965 by the Mattachine Society. It also showed the "Annual Reminder Marches" initiated on July 4, 1965, which took place each year until 1970, when it became the Stonewall commemoration.

You could see the Civil Rights Movement's influence. A song by a Mattachine Society member began: "Mine eyes have seen the struggling of the Negroes and the Jews / I have seen the countries trampled where the laws of men abuse / But you crush the homosexual with anything you choose / Now we are marching on."

A 1970 "Gay Manifesto" by Carl Wittman of Red Butterfly says, "Our first job is to free ourselves; that means clearing our heads of the garbage that's been poured into them.... But not every straight is our enemy. Many of us have mixed identities, and have ties with other liberation movements.... And face it; we can't change Amerika alone."

A wonderful, colorful array of posters, buttons, photos, and writings filled the following section on the post-Stonewall movement. A beautiful 1981 poster for a meeting that featured a "dialogue between two poets," from which Adrienne Rich and Audre Lorde's faces looked out, reminded me of the continuing discussions in the movement, such as on the relation between white lesbians and lesbians of color.

—Laurie Cashdar

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'A battle of ideas on every street corner'

by Gene Ford

With the upcoming November elections we can see the beginnings of a democratically elected police state. Two reactionary bills have hit California. One is the crime bill—three strikes you're out; and two is Proposition 187 on the November ballot. Many immigrants classified as illegal, who will lose all public assistance except emergency care if it passes, will see this bill for what it is: another form of ethnic cleansing. It is the "democratic" form of extinguishing undesirables from the "richest soil" within the Americas.

Proposition 187 would make it illegal for an undocumented immigrant to attend any public school from elementary to college level. It would refuse health care, including prenatal and postnatal care. It would create new felony laws and stiffen penalties for those who violate the proposed immigration policy, making doctors and teachers agents of the state.

To the capitalist drive toward the absolute law of capitalist accumulation, subjects become objects to be exploited and controlled mentally and chained physically to the production process. Where that production process becomes bankrupt, then the revolutionary subject becomes an object of despair to be despised and hated for all the system's problems. Mainly these problems are economic shortcomings. So the weak links in the capitalist chain are used by the state as a pressure relief valve for a frustrated majority population of white society. The bourgeoisie needs a scapegoat.

Proposition 187 lays the ground for a full-fledged attack upon welfare benefits for all, even citizens. Welfare has already been cut to the bone; what is to stop the state from cutting deeper once it has set the mood? Cuts in benefits for minorities seem to be a capitalist wave of the present to protect its future profit. California is laying the groundwork.

DEFYING THE SYSTEM OF POVERTY

The crime bill is another part of that new wave of reaction. In this country when you mention crime, most people see Black. While the bill in a certain sense is massive in scope, billions of dollars will be spent to build more prisons and add 100,000 more police officers on the streets. Some of the finer points of the bill cut into basic constitutional rights, like the right to assemble. It defines street gangs as five or more youngsters who are seen together for about a month. If one commits two "predicate gang crimes," all are considered gang members, even if some have never committed a crime or have only an informal relationship with the other youth. Participation in a so-called street gang will become a federal offense punishable by up to a 20-year prison sentence.

Society as a whole is beginning to see two or more Black youth on any inner city street corner as a threat or a gang, and they are classified as such and singled out for systematic attack by the police. But within the inner city of projects and poverty there is a certain amount of comfort in numbers. The mood of the masses is the need for new human relations. A fierce battle of ideas on every street corner is a threat to the poverty existence which can be characterized as "no job, no money, no future." Poverty can afford no hiding place but stands defiant on every street corner of the inner city.

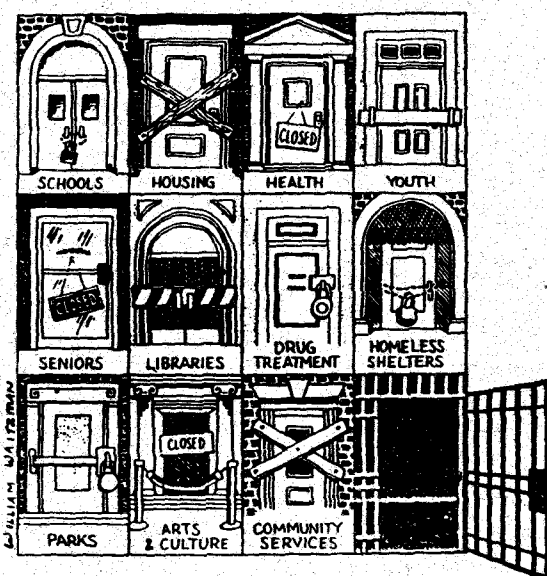
A new movie called "The Fire This Time" recently

took up the 1992 L.A. rebellion as rooted in the 1965 historic Watts rebellion. In this film one Black gang youth who was interviewed stated that living in the projects of Watts reminded him of being in prison, because either you went to school in the morning or you stayed in your house: "Around here most people are out of work, but you get up early, 6:00 or something. It's like school. You learn the streets, to live. If you don't get out early, it's like this, you're dead!"

So the dream of freedom to determine our own destiny is very much alive among the most oppressed, those imprisoned in the poverty of life as half dead, but who possess the wealth of thought and demand recognition. We dare to dream the same dream that has filled the ghetto.

VICTIMS OF DEMOCRACY

However, we have come together to do more than just dream. We have come together to make concrete plans for action that will rid this world of the curse (injustice fueled by greed and exploitation) that has plagued humanity for centuries, as stated by Theresa Allison, founder of Mothers Reclaiming Our Children, which publishes the voice of prisoners hungry for freedom as well as the voice of mothers who are living in pain from their children's existence within street gangs and under



police repression and false imprisonment. The curse has laid a mental path of Black self-destruction, a chain of events that must be broken if a freedom living future can be found.

These so-called democratic bills or propositions have been or will be voted into law. The majority will say that Proposition 187 will not affect me because I am Black and a citizen of this country, or I am white and the crime bill will protect me. All of you with limited vision should learn to connect the dots. When you connect the dots to all these new bills, you find an economically depressed capitalist system where no economic boom of recovery can be found anywhere in sight, and the need is for another and another victim. When the dots are finally con-

nected we find a noose around each of our necks because the system of capitalist accumulation always needs another victim to further its deadly existence.

The victims of the accumulation of capital are not just at the point of production: workers as an appendage to the machine or in the unemployment lines where robots have thrown many out of work across the country. It can be seen in the attack upon intellectuals as well, where the robotization of the mind by the capitalist system needs the intellectual to continue to perpetuate their control over the masses' thinking.

We can turn to the most recent exodus from Cuba. It is not just the poorest laborers who are risking their lives crossing the open seas in makeshift rafts to reach U.S. shores, but also the intellectuals, teachers, doctors, etc., professionals rushing out of Castro's Cuba. One teacher stated that he had a large house and a good wage in Cuba but that he will not gain intellectual freedom. "The main repression was here in the mind. When you teach the children in Cuba as I did, you must speak what Castro says. You never speak your own words. That is the biggest jail. The jail of the mind." I would like to re-emphasize that the 1992 L.A. rebellion expressed anew the bankruptcy of capitalist democracy. Under capitalism the idea of democracy is embodied in the accumulation of wealth, it dominates all that exists even down to that individual act of voting.

So the concept of mind, thought itself, is lost. We as a people and as an organization are in the process of re-developing that thought, Marxist-Humanist revolutionary thought, anew for today. The battle lines have been drawn.

Who killed Simeon Stinson?

Anaheim, Cal.—Simeon Stinson was a rebel with a cause, a fearless 52-year-old union organizer at Weber Aircraft Company whose body was found at an intersection here at 12 a.m. on Jan. 29. Prior to his death, Stinson's mother said some men in a car who may have been skinheads threw cans at him as he walked the three miles from the plant to his home near Disneyland.

His family warned him to stop his normal journey from work to home. But his mother, Mrs. Ruth Stinson, who is the aunt of this reporter, said he continued to walk despite their concerns. He also continued his skillful union organizing at Weber Aircraft, where he was one of the main people pushing plant officials to restore a \$4.00 cut from the \$14.00 hourly wages. Angry Weber officials only wanted to give back \$2.00.

No one really knows who killed Stinson or the real reason for his death. Local police are treating it as a homicide. Mrs. Stinson said authorities told her Simeon's body was taken to the intersection and that he was already dead when run over.

Even in death Simeon Stinson was a passionate, committed union man. His fellow workers stood in line at the plant one day recently to shake the hands of his two brothers who were visiting the plant. "They wanted to shake the hands of the brothers of the man who had done so much for them," declared his mother.

—Joseph Delaney, NMLS Notes

Debating multiculturalism

John Alan's "Can multiculturalism transcend alienation?" (N&L, August-September '94) does not mention Hegel's conservative aesthetic or his antipathy toward non-European cultures as well as some troubling male chauvinism in Fanon (notably, the "Conclusion" of *The Wretched of the Earth*). What makes such insights possible? It is the historicity of multiculturalism (as well as postmodernism, postcolonialism, feminism, etc.) that captures the fact of societal precariousness, dissent, though one confined in a grotesque gallery of mirrors.

No, "[c]ulture is not an absolute, i.e., an unmediated phenomenon without change or development" and is totally cheapened in capitalism not to mention the reactionary morality of much culture these days, but culture is also not a promise, is not an abstract "totality," however great its promises. (Also, identity, not to be viewed one-dimensionally as fixed identity, determines totality, not vice versa, that is, unless all is determined in some preternatural "misty realm.")

It is one thing to have an historicist insight on multiculturalism, but it is another to be more multiculturalist than multiculturalism, to transcend its limits, to penetrate its humanist dimension. It is one thing to perceive culture from the "outside," waiting for its next doomed expression, but another to express culture from the "inside," that is, from the standpoint of "positive Humanism." Culture alone is not the pathway to freedom, but freedom is nothing without culture, culture making freedom truly objective.

Also, why has much of the "battle of ideas" been from a predetermined viewpoint, the predetermination of postmodernism, multiculturalism, etc., as base consciousness with little or no internal delving, that is, after the fact? And rap, for instance, is reghettoized into the limbo of Black youth culture, of Black (reflection of) reality, with its truths perhaps, though its only significant contradiction up to now being its contradictory views from Marxist-Humanism—it is arrested only to let go, deserted again. What of the '70s revival in Black as well as popular youth culture nowadays, what it reveals, etc.? Postmodernism, by comparison, is much more concrete in its affirmation of culture. Marxist-Humanism must be much more concrete.

—Steven J.

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

sued General Cedras to make the deal. Then he argued to President Clinton that the terms should be accepted, even though they left General Cedras in Haiti, because they would get U.S. troops on the ground without a fight—and once 15,000 Americans were there, they would call the tune." (NYT, 9-23-94)

Expressing a bizarre amalgam of "humanitarianism" and imperialism in the face of the apparent disarray in Clinton's foreign policy, Jesse Jackson, another drum beater for U.S. invasion, took the lead in articulating the Clinton doctrine: "Our humanitarian purpose is tempered with the cold steel of vital interest."

With Black leadership shouldering the "White Man's Burden," New York Times columnist Bob Herbert contorts the "benign imperialism" argument even further: "The long and loathsome role the United States played in the exploitation of the Haitian people is a point that should be considered by those who persist in asking what interest we have in standing up for democracy there." (NYT, 9-18-94) However, it is the "long and loathsome role" that the U.S. plays today that must be exposed and opposed, whether that be the CIA's role in the 1991 coup that ousted President Aristide, or the various political leaders in the U.S., white and Black, who have ties to the ruling class in Haiti, such as Commerce Secretary Ron Brown who was for years on a \$250,000 retainer from the hated Duvalier regime. As Jean-Patrick St. George, the leader of a youth organization in Port-au-Prince, asserted in regard to Clinton's bungling Haiti policy, "The terrifying thing is, this is how the Americans are going to straighten out our affairs."

While the multi-ethnic composition of the occupation forces in Haiti gives African-American leaders the illusion that U.S. imperialism is somehow more "benign" because of the presence of Black troops and officers, it doesn't exhaust their ideological ground. Frantz Fanon had argued that there is a more fundamental, and in this case, self-contradictory dialectic at work: "Racism stares one in the face for it so happens that it belongs in a characteristic whole: that of the shameless exploitation of one group of men by another which has reached a higher

stage of technical development. This is why military and economic oppression generally precedes, makes possible, and legitimizes racism. The habit of considering racism as a mental quirk, as a psychological flaw must be abandoned." (Toward the African Revolution, pp. 37-38)

Today, the high tech stage of economic and military development has rationalized a new form of appearance of racism which allows the state to coopt African-American leadership to its imperialist campaigns against Black people abroad, even as it carries out its authoritarian repression of Black people at home. The color line along which the Black middle class and its leadership had previously sought common cause with the lower classes at home, at the same time as it articulated a Black anti-imperialism in solidarity with the Third World abroad, has become an insurmountable class divide.

This divide marks off those who have achieved a certain technological facility relative to capitalist accumulation versus those who have not, whether they be the "wretched of the earth" in the underdeveloped Third World or the so-called "underclass" here at home. More than at any other time, the technological imperative of capitalist accumulation has become the historical determinant of social assimilation and bourgeois moral right of the Black middle class.

Gone is the Black moral outrage at the military interventionism of a racist country like the U.S. America's Black elite instead find a so-called humanitarian good in the very same interventionism it had formerly castigated as the moral equivalent of evil. "Black" as an historical identification no longer exercises the same socializing force it formerly had among people of African descent, so fragmented is Black identity under the impact of the present high tech imperative and the ideological retrogression of our age.

While Blacks coopted in this way act in ways that are in sharp contradiction with Black social existence, the racist, Fanon reminds us, in a culture which is racist, appears quite "normal," having "achieved a perfect harmony of economic relations and ideology." (p. 40) If so principled a freedom fighter as Douglass could succumb to the order-mongering designs of U.S. imperialism at the end of the last century, how much more fatal will be the outcome of today's alliance of Black politics and U.S. imperialism at the end of a century that opened with W.E.B. DuBois's prescient forecast—"The problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line."

Under the whip of occupation—Who will listen to Haitian masses?

(Continued from page 1)

makes it impossible to foretell in advance the ultimate outcome of the present crisis. Despite the U.S.'s intentions, their subjectivity contains the potential for shaping the course of things to come.

THE VOICES FROM BELOW

As a coalition of five Haitian mass organizations opposed to U.S. intervention stated this summer, what distinguishes today's situation from the U.S. military invasion of Haiti in 1915 is "the emergence of the people of Haiti onto the political scene. The process of popular mobilization which precipitated the departure of Jean-Claude Duvalier meant that the popular sectors, historically marginalized, would henceforth understand their power as autonomous political subjects, actors in the life and development of the nation."

The 1986 revolt against the Duvalier dictatorship wrote a new page in the history of world freedom struggles by centering on the call for a "dechoukaj" (uprooting) of the old. Its prime movers were unemployed youth in massive protest marches, market women who refused to open their stalls, and workers and peasants who hunted down the hated tonton macoutes and other officials of the old regime. New forms of grassroots organization emerged, such as the *ti kominite legliz*—"base communities" centered on the teaching of liberation theology. As one participant wrote at the time, "People are stressing the surprising effectiveness of mass organizations without General Secretaries, without Central Committees, without hierarchy or visible structure: the political police finds no one to arrest, because they cannot arrest the whole population."*

That the masses continued to suffer much repression by the military regimes which followed Duvalier did not mean their struggle was crushed. Between 1986 and 1991 the peasant movement mushroomed, as seen in the growth of such organizations as the Peasant Movement of Papay: by 1991 it had 35,000 members organized in 2,500 groups, including 300 women's and 250 youth groups. New labor organizations, such as the *Centrale Generale des Travailleurs*, were formed in 1990. And thousands of liberation theology base communities arose, helping to spur such political movements as *Lavalas* (Flood), which ran Aristide as its presidential candidate in 1990.

Aristide's stunning election victory demonstrated the strength of the popular movement in Haiti. This is precisely what Haiti's ruling elite—which is 1% of the population but controls 50% of the national wealth—sought to crush through Cedras' military coup of 1991.

THE U.S. HOSTILITY TOWARD HAITI

The very depth of this mass movement explains the hostile reception to it on the part of the U.S. policymakers. In 1986 Reagan responded to the unexpected departure of Duvalier by propping up the "interim" military government of Gen. Namphy with tens of millions of U.S. dollars. In 1991 Bush responded to the military coup against Aristide (which some suspect the U.S. of engineering) by paying lip service to "democracy" while doing nothing to impede Cedras' effort to dismember the mass movement.

Things at least appeared to be different at first with Clinton, who attacked Bush's policy during the election campaign and promised to reverse his policy of repatriating Haitian refugees. Yet when the number of Haitians seeking to flee the dictatorship was made known to him, Clinton quickly reversed himself. From the very start of his administration he was faced with a dilemma: how to prevent an exodus of Haitian refugees to the U.S. without appearing to totally side with so anti-democratic and repressive a regime as Cedras'.

The administration's response was to plan for an eventual U.S. invasion to displace the Cedras regime. Yet at no time was the U.S. interested in allowing Aristide to return to power on the basis of the mandate received by him in the 1990 elections. From the summer of 1993 to the last-minute deal arranged last month between Cedras and Carter-Nunn-Powell, the U.S. insisted on a host of restrictions on Aristide's power to eventually govern Haiti.

This explains why so many of the mass organizations inside Haiti have opposed any form of U.S. military intervention. On July 14 a statement signed by leading mass organizations, such as the Program for Alternative Justice and the Help Service for Development and Popular Development, stated "The whole policy of the international community under the leadership of the U.S. consists in breaking the symbolic figure which Aristide represents and pushing to transfer his legitimacy to the key leaders of the enemy camp. It appears as though they are taking into account the claims of the Aristide government, but in practice, they are actually achieving a completely different goal."

"U.S. intervention is a way to definitely block the emergence of the people onto the political scene of their country. The only intervention capable of restoring the democratic process in Haiti is massive and democratic popular intervention. Any solution which does not give first place to that primary truth is doomed to total failure and will only add irreparable disasters to the already intolerable suffering of a martyred population."

And as another statement signed by a group representing over 1,000 priests and nuns linked to the liberation theology movement said, "Don't be fooled. This intervention will be made against the Haitian people, because it follows from the same logic as the coup d'etat [of

Cedras], simply put, to legitimize its principal gain under an international cover: the total erasure of the Haitian people from the political scene of their country."

THE CUBAN CONNECTION

The effort to erase the initiative and creativity of the masses underlines U.S. policy, not alone on Haiti, but in the Caribbean as a whole—as can be seen from the conflict between the U.S. and Cuba over immigration.

This conflict arose last August when Castro suddenly decided to allow Cubans to take to the seas for the U.S. Clinton responded by slapping new sanctions on Castro and reversing the longstanding policy of allowing virtually unlimited Cuban immigration into the U.S. The conflict was later resolved when Castro agreed to halt the refugee exodus in exchange for a U.S. promise to take in 20,000 legal Cuban immigrants a year.

It has virtually already been forgotten, however, that this refugee crisis was a product of a mass revolt. It occurred on Aug. 5, when thousands of protestors marched through Havana chanting "Liberty, Democracy, Enough!" in the largest display of popular discontent in the history of Castro's dictatorship. The marchers looted several well-stocked shops that sell goods only for U.S. dollars, opposing the two-tier dollar-vs.-peso economy which increasingly defines Cuban state-capitalism.

Castro's decision to allow Cubans to take to the seas for the U.S. was part of an effort to deflect attention from this mass revolt. Clinton's bellicose rhetoric against Cuba in the days which followed only played into Castro's hands, insofar as it helped shift attention away from the internal crisis in Cuba to the imperialist ambitions of the U.S.

Whether it concern Haiti or Cuba, the rulers always find common ground when it comes to subsuming the subjectivity of the masses. This must be opposed by rooting ourselves in the desire for freedom being articulated by those opposed to all existing regimes.

THE NADIR OF ANTI-INTERVENTIONISM

Precisely because so many have illusions about the "benign" role of U.S. intervention in Haiti, the present situation calls for a rigorous critique of the very foundations of U.S. policy. Yet nothing would be more illusory than to presume that mere expose of the horrors of U.S. policy will suffice. This should be evident from the right-wing attack on Clinton's invasion of Haiti, which is vent-

ing some of the most open expressions of racism this country has seen in years.

Bob Dole's contention that Haiti "is not worth one American life" is by no means the only or most extreme expression of this reactionary anti-imperialism. Such open expressions of racism reflect the growth in size and power of deeply reactionary forces in the U.S.—as seen in the campaigns being waged by the Christian Right.

The more the nefarious consequences of the U.S. invasion become evident in coming weeks, the more vocal will be those who oppose intervention on the grounds that a small Black island like Haiti "deserves what it gets."

This presents us with a new situation. It signifies that the knee-jerk kind of anti-interventionism which has heretofore predominated in the movement, based on expressing what it is against while leaving mute any expression of what it is for, has become totally nonviable. Put simply, cries of "No U.S. Intervention" based on the standard approach of muting the expression of the kind of new society we are for simply fails to project any principled ground to distinguish ourselves from the anti-interventionist racists on the right.

Throughout the history of Marxist-Humanism opposition to war has always centered on projecting a comprehensive concept and vision of a new society to replace both decadent capitalism and state-capitalism which called itself "Communism." In light of today's situation, there is no room for considering this an "idealist extravagance" or mere "edifying discourse." It is the essential ground needed for the opposition to capitalism-imperialism to even be.

What stands in the way of achieving this is that just when the rulers have adopted the rhetoric of "democratic revolutions" in order to conceal the class nature of their efforts to contain social upheaval, the Left has abandoned the effort to project a truly liberating vision of the future by bowing to the fetish of bourgeois democracy and "civil society"—oblivious of how it is simply taking the rulers' ground.

Such mental straitjackets must be removed if our solidarity with the Haitian masses is to become total—a solidarity that begins right now, by demanding the removal of all obstacles aiming to hem in their self-activity—whether it be the Haitian military or the the U.S. troops themselves.

—Sept. 30, 1994

Caribbean peoples' history of exodus



Cuban refugees detained in Panama: "Fidel, Gringos, the rafters are not negotiable!"

The most subjective and objective expression of the catastrophic human condition in the Caribbean is the ongoing desperate, explosive, massive, daily exodus of people from Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. The requirements in time, economically and politically, to qualify for ordinary visiting visas, "immigrant visas" (resident visas) and political asylum never have been so strictly detached from the needs of people facing state repression, poverty, unemployment, low wages, and overwork. To be poor, especially Black, and called "refugee" is to question the very nature of today's society. It is, in Fidel Castro's words, to be an "anti-social element, a lumpen, and a delinquent."

CUBA: The 20,000-visas-a-year agreement that the Cuban and U.S. governments signed to protect each other's shores totally excluded more than 30,000 Cubans who rebelled on Aug. 5, 1994, at the Malecon district in Havana. It was the first such spontaneous, massive revolt in 34 years against growing social injustice and economic and political readjustment policies.

Despite the trade embargo of the U.S., the Cuban government has official political and economic relations with 80 countries. Under pressure from the IMF and the World Bank, the Cuban government has moved toward dollarizing its economy, sought international capital investments, participates in regional trade arrangements, and has liberalized some sectors of state businesses.

The poor, employed, and unemployed—mostly young women and men—took to the streets of Havana. They attacked tourist dollar-only stores, hotels, and other symbols of capitalism. Castro immediately ordered the police and the "Committee for Defence of the Revolution" to repress the rebellion. Then he announced to the world that those who wanted to leave, could do so. Simultaneously he accused the U.S. government of fomenting the situation in Cuba, as if neocolonial underdevelopment was not also a question of Cuba's capitalist development since 1961.

Thus pushed to the seas, the people who decided to

leave were made victims in the immigration deal between the two governments. Those "Balseros" and "Balseras" (boat people) who survived the travesty—by making the crossing—remain, men separated from women and children, trapped in detention centers in the U.S., in former British colonies, in U.S. bases in Guantanamo and Panama as well as in other places. They cannot return to Cuba, but to apply for a visa to enter the U.S., one must apply in Cuba. They will remain prisoners until the U.S. and Cuban governments decide their fate.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: Most of the stories of Dominicans taking to the seas only make news when a monumental tragedy happens like the one on Sept. 19 when 13 people drowned. Yet the constant flow of "yolas" (boats) since the early '80s, has become a principal element in modern Dominican working class culture and history. Hundreds of thousands have sold house, land, even family to put to sea from the eastern side of the island, through the vicious Mona Passage toward western Puerto Rico. (Some three years ago passengers of a small helicopter videotaped scenes of people, mostly Dominicans, being eaten alive by sharks. Nothing could be done.) Many are thrown from boats or the boats sink. Many thousands have reached Puerto Rico and even the U.S. Many are imprisoned in detention centers in Puerto Rico, the U.S., and other neighboring nations. They are then repatriated, and because Dominican jails are full, they are released and try it again. However some half dozen Dominicans, detained on Sept. 13 on Anasco Beach by Puerto Rican Maritime Units, rebelled with sticks and machetes as they were taken to the processing center for illegal immigration in Punta Borinquen.

HAITI: As popular demonstrations and brutal police brutal repression continue while the invading U.S. Marines "watch," this is what a Haitian friend told me: "The bourgeoisie is clear that it needs to reorganize itself and needs U.S. assistance to have a new beginning. They and the U.S. fear a popular explosion. Despite all the efforts to control the movement of people, the flow of Haitian refugees will not be stopped because today's social conditions of political repression and starvation recreate it. People will do anything to survive. Perhaps this intervention helps the Left reorganize itself." This desperate situation of the masses of people moves them in all directions. The Dominican racist bourgeois state has further militarized the frontier as ordered by the UN (See also "Dominican Election Fraud," N&L, June 1994).

As many as 50,000 Haitians threw themselves to the seas and like Dominican people, they are not given political asylum status, even now that Cuban refugees are treated no better. They have all protested—Haitians, Dominicans and Cubans. Some committed suicide. In a changed, post-Cold War, capitalist world, the only threat to the existing order is the spontaneous movement of people seeking Bread and Freedom. This movement is not limited to the Caribbean, but it is the history of the Caribbean as a whole.

—Sin Mas

* Quoted in *Haiti-Observateur*, March 7, 1986. See also the analysis of the 1986 revolt in "Can Haiti's revolt be deepened to revolution?" by Kevin A. Barry, *News & Letters*, April 1986.

Youth

150 years after Marx's Humanist Essays

Commodity fetishism unmasked

by Maya Jhansi

I was surprised recently to see in *The Humanist* a very exciting article called "Notes from an Iron Cage: Humanism and the Commodity Fetish" by Lynne Nugent, an undergraduate college student. In it, Nugent takes up the way in which commodity fetishism has become the new religion of our times, and she singles out Karl Marx as the philosopher who has captured this. "Are we really free now?" she begins, "I think not; I think that our souls are claimed by a new religion....Karl Marx, who had an eye for the invisible, wrote in his *Economic Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844 about how this new religion was killing people outright or filling their lives with pain, and he denounced it as the fetishism of commodities."

Nugent expresses a deep opposition to consumerist society which, she argues, strips us of our humanity: "Dehumanization, according to Marx, comes from valuing something else over the human person: 'The more man attributes to God, the less he retains in himself. The worker puts his life into the object; then it no longer belongs to him but to the object.'" Marx, she points out, called the "endless broken promises of commodity fetishism" alienation.

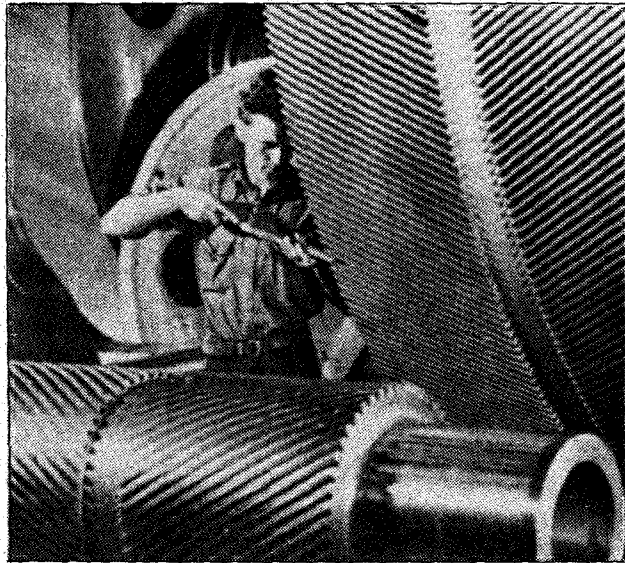
What is most exciting to me is that at a time when Marx is being declared dead, a young woman like Nugent poses Humanism as an alternative to the dehumanization of consumerist society. This shows a unique striving for a vision of the future different from the one blaring out of our TV sets. She calls Humanism "a new place to stand, a point of view that differs from the dominant ideology." Humanism can help us "resist the commodity fetish" because of "its emphasis on reason and compassion."

Nugent's discussion of Humanism raises a great number of questions that youth today need to deal with. First of all, can the fetishism of commodities be resisted by a Humanism defined through reason and good will alone? This question brings us to a central problematic in the essay: What is commodity fetishism? Is it simply consumerism? Is it the same as alienation?

As Marx said in *Capital*, the divine status of the commodity arises at the very moment of its production from the very form of the commodity itself: "This I call the

Fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labor, so soon as they are produced as commodities, and which is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities."

As against the way many "Marxists" vulgarized Marx's thought, Marx himself held that fetishism arises before the product is exchanged. Alienation arises not only from the alienation of the product from the producer, but from the very mode of production where human activity itself is alienated.



We cannot separate fetishism from the commodity. To get rid of one, we have to get rid of both. This is what the so-called Communist countries denied—they argued that you could have commodities without fetishism.

Fetishism of commodities describes the perversion of human relations into relations between things. It's not just that human relations seem that way under capitalism. That's the way they really are. Fetishism does not stop where it begins at the point of production. It encompasses the whole of society, all human relations, and pervades the thought of the period.

To challenge the fetishism of commodities then requires that one take responsibility for one's thought, that we become as Nugent put it, critical thinkers—not only so we can resist the consumerist messages we see on TV but also so we can develop a Humanist vision as a viable alternative to this perverted, anti-human society.

Marx's 1844 *Manuscripts*, did not, after all, only articulate the alienation of capitalist society. These *Manuscripts* signaled the birth of a whole new philosophy which Marx himself called a "new Humanism." Thorough-going Naturalism or Humanism, Marx wrote, "distinguishes itself both from Idealism and Materialism, and is at the same time the truth uniting both."

We cannot abolish the fetishism of commodities without abolishing capitalism. That much Marx makes clear. But, to restate what Marx's Humanism means for today in a way that does not have us repeat the errors of the past, we have to be oppressively aware, as Raya Dunayevskaya said, that "To historical materialists, the inseparability of facts and ideas, of action and critique of other philosophic interpretations of the world, of philosophy and revolution [is] the only way to destroy the false idols that [keep] one imprisoned under capitalism."

Rally blasts ethnic cleansing California-style

Sacramento, Cal.—Amidst messages on T-shirts, banners and signs such as "Deport Pete Wilson" (California governor) and "Say No to 3 Reichs and You're Out," 300 demonstrators from the Bay Area and Los Angeles gathered on the steps of the capitol on Aug. 22 to protest Propositions 187 and 184.

Prop. 187, the infamous Save Our States initiative, proposes legislation that would deny undocumented persons non-emergency medical care and ban their children from public schools. Prop. 184 simply reaffirms the existing Three Strikes law which is retroactive to age 16. Both will appear on the Nov. 8 ballot.

Rally organizer Dorsey Nunn opened up the speak-out by declaring, "There are no illegal human beings." He urged a highly charged crowd to "Say No to turning schoolteachers into INS agents." Nunn, an African-American activist who has referred to himself as a fourth generation ex-con, heads a prisoners' rights organization called Free At Last.

Wilson Riles Jr., former Oakland city councilman of progressive renown, now of American Friends Service Committee, noted the law's racist intent: "They will not be looking for undocumented Canadians."

The youngest speakers evoked the loudest and longest responses. It started with a Black youth from South Central Community Coalition, an organization of Blacks and Latinos. He had been stumbling through his notes when he suddenly confessed, "Aw man, I'm messin' up." He pocketed the notes and began speaking ad lib. Inspired by his recovery and the ovation he received, other members of SCCC followed with ever more enthralling and informative presentations.

One young woman warned of a movement in the state legislature to make Three Strikes retroactive to age 14. Another pointed out that 57% of state taxes go to criminal justice and only 3.7% to education. A Latino youth concluded SCCC's segment by asserting, "We don't want

Law comes down on youth

Chicago—My friends and I were walking out of one of those little grocery stores with a Mexican restaurant inside eating the tortas we bought when four narcos came up. They stopped some white boys, then they let them go and came up to us and said we were "gang loitering" because we were wearing "gang colors." And they locked us up.

On our court date there were a lot of guys there we knew because they had locked up a lot of people from the neighborhood that day. So we were just outside of the court afterwards waiting for everyone to come out because some of them had rides and some didn't. Then the police came and said we were gang loitering again.

I couldn't believe it. How are we going to gang loiter in front of the police station? We would be fools to do that. So I showed them my bond paper with my court date and said, "I just came from court in here!" They said, "We don't care," and locked us up again.

They arrested us right there in front of Eleventh and State, the main police headquarters. All they did was put us in the cars, drive into the alley and take us in through the back to the lockup.

For the original charge I had to go to "gang school" at the police station at Belmont and Western. They said if you want to get out of the gang, they got people who could help you and stuff like that. They talked about finishing school, going to college and getting jobs.

But everybody says when you go to stuff like that you try not to even think about what they're saying. You just want to get it over with. It's like they just want you to act a certain way. They want you to be what they want you be: some white boys.

They think we are all criminals, that all we do is just stand on the corner, gang bang and sell drugs. There's a little bit of everything in every race. You can't say all Latinos and Blacks are gang bangers. They just live in the ghetto.

Even so I know two girls who went to college and a lot of people who have jobs, and they still get harassed by the police. Like me, I work. I always say, "Why are you harassing me?" They say, "The point is you still hang out." I say, "What, I can't be out on the street with my friends?" They know I work, I've been working since I was 17. The cops called up the factory where I work to verify that I really work there.

—Twenty-year-old Latino

Youth in Revolt

by Marna Leber

The student government at Berlin, Germany's, Free University urged foreign students to arm themselves with non-lethal weapons, like tear gas, to respond to the escalating racist attacks against them. The announcement came after a Kurdish woman student was violently attacked at a subway station, as onlookers did not help her. A student government member said that racism at the university was rampant in classrooms as well. She said, "We really don't want an escalation of violence...(but this is our way of saying) this is enough."

An American Indian student is on a hunger strike at the University of Oklahoma to protest the university's official response to an incident where a group of fraternity members destroyed a tepee set up on the campus for Indian Heritage Week and harassed and assaulted the students inside. Stephen A. Selkirk is conducting a "spiritual fast" because the administration did not agree that the incident was racially motivated.

Race and class in Wedowee

Wedowee, Ala.—I flew to Texas from Chicago to be part of a reporting team at the 37th annual convention of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Dallas Aug. 16-19. Over 300 youth were in attendance, including two youth from Wedowee, Ala., the site of attacks by the racist principal of the local high school, Huland Humphries, and a flashpoint of youth and worker resistance.

Revonda Bowen was not only a victim of racist abuse by Humphries, being called a "mistake" for having a white father and Black mother, but she also was a fighter. She knew it was not okay for Humphries to make racist comments despite the fact that he had done so for nearly 26 years as the Randolph County High School (RCHS) principal.

In Revonda's own words, "I've always been known to stand up for my rights. I've learned people go to jail for standing up for their rights. By standing up we allow others behind us to stand up for their rights. We can't take nothing for granted, you have to stand up for everything you believe in."

Ms. Bowen's defiance of Humphries allowed students and Blacks to stand up to the racist town administration which included Humphries, the town sheriff, the bank president and the majority of the local school board. Her defiance gives the Black and white workers in Wedowee not only space to live and work together, as they have done for years despite the media's sensationalism of racial tension, but space to fight together.

Chris Brown, the white boyfriend of Ms. Bowen, was firmly in support of Revonda and in an informal discussion agreed it was a mistake for SCLC to decide not to march in Wedowee on Aug. 20, considering the Klan would be marching nearby that same day.

When I arrived in Wedowee itself, the story became clearer. Humphries, who had grown up in town, had many people covering for him, including some students and whites who were part of the patronage system in town who were not otherwise outwardly racist.

Before the incident with Revonda Bowen, Humphries had been cited twice by the Justice Department—for beating up a white mother who came to him complaining about the way her child was being disciplined and for segregating the school buses for a period lasting until 1989. Humphries had also been known to paddle students, including pregnant young women, over his desk. He had kicked white and Black football players off the team for dating people not of their "race." Humphries had also let two young thugs, not students at RCHS, come onto school property and beat up a Black student or dating a white girl.

Humphries was known to expel students permanently from school for various infractions, creating a layer of young workers without high school diplomas, who worked in the town's industries—poultry and textile carpet—for low wages and under poor conditions.

Despite Humphries' brutality and racism, he was hereby the focal point of the racism, because he was principal of the high school and disciplinarian of the one group, the young folks, who were openly unwilling to stand for his racism. Humphries was the plug in the hole of change in Wedowee.

—Robin Kissinger

Congress bashes gays

Chicago—The U.S. Senate and House is considering cutting off funding to school districts that "teach" homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle. These measures are connected to the Elementary and Secondary Act which provides federal funding to 90% of the country's school districts. As the House and Senate haggle over the language of the final version of this act, now is the time to make our voices heard.

This is a clear indicator of the retrogression we are facing in today's screwed-up world. This is not Oregon, or Colorado—this is the U.S. government prohibiting schools from distributing educational materials, providing counselling and even giving students referrals to gay and lesbian support services.

Things don't look good right now for gay and lesbian youth. The last thing they need is more fear and alienation, especially when suicide is the number one cause of death for gay teen-agers. They need a new way of seeing themselves. They need new human relations, and a new society.

—Tom Williamson

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The Aug. 21 Mexican election was determined in a most fundamental way by the Jan. 1 Chiapas revolt, despite the official voting results reported by the government. They delivered a majority once more to the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and its presidential candidate, Ernesto Zedillo, who won by the slightest majority ever in PRI's 65 years in power—50%. The rightist National Action Party (PAN) came in next at 27%. Cuauhtemoc Cardenas of the Democratic Revolution Party (PRD) came in a dismal third with 17%. Although the government claimed a record turnout, many people said they did not see any difference among the three candidates whose platforms would carry on Salinas' "free market" restructuring of the Mexican economy.

Electoral fraud by the PRI did not become the issue it was in 1988, when central ballot-tabulating computers "suddenly" crashed, and it is widely believed Carlos Salinas stole the election from Cardenas. That blatant manipulation of "democracy" produced such outrage that the PRI was forced to pass some mild electoral reform laws and the country was flooded by tens of thousands

Nigeria crushes strikes

By early September, Nigeria's military leader, Sani Abacha, appeared for the moment to have crushed the mass unrest which began in June when Moshood Abiola, cheated out of his 1993 election victory by Abacha's coup, declared himself to be the true President of Nigeria. Today, Abiola and hundreds of labor, political and intellectual leaders sit in jail, while Abacha has openly assumed what he terms "absolute power."

On Sept. 5, 90,000 oil workers, whose pro-democracy protest strike had paralyzed the economy for two months, returned to work. During August, the oil workers were joined by millions of other strikers, from factory workers to teachers to civil servants. The strikes were strongest in the South, where Abiola's Yoruba ethnic group predominates, and the Southeast, where Igbo predominate, each of these regions also mainly Christian. Supported by the wealthy Hausa-Fulani Muslim elite of Northern Nigeria, the military dictatorship responded to the strikes and demonstrations with force and arrests. Even in the North, however, working people and students came out onto the streets to demand that the military step down.

Today, as the generals seek to use North-South and Muslim-Christian rivalries to stay in power, the country is closer to civil war than at any time since the 1960s, when the Southeast attempted to liberate itself by declaring independence as Biafra. The Biafra War, 1967-70, saw a million deaths, mainly of Igbo civilians, who were either killed directly by the army or allowed to starve. In that conflict, the Yoruba people of the South refused to back Biafra against the northern military. Today both the South and the Southeast, as well as some elements in the North, stand united as never before against the Northern-dominated military who have dominated the country ever since they were groomed for that role by the departing British imperialists. Then, the British feared the more leftist political leaders of the South and Southeast. Today the situation is different, since Abiola is a conservative billionaire businessman.

Mexican election in shadow of Chiapas

of independent poll watchers and international observers. But as one monitor pointed out, the PRI perpetrated fraud during the entire 1994 campaign, and not just on election day, from controlling the main media coverage to intimidating voters with the loss of their jobs.

More importantly, the certainty of massive and widespread protests, as well as armed resistance by the EZLN (Zapatista National Liberation Army), kept the election as "clean" as it was. Significantly, the one major challenge to the election results has been raised by Amado Avendano, the PRD candidate for governor of the state of Chiapas. Avendano, who has been openly sympathetic to the aims of the revolt, has refused to recognize the PRI's victory claim.

An event central to the context of the elections, and beyond, was held two weeks earlier when the Zapatistas con-



Mexican police stopped protesters—including Superbarrio, a well-known masked crusader for the rights of the poor—from marching on the Federal Electoral Institute demanding a fraud-free election.

vened the National Democratic Convention in Chiapas. Speaking to why the Zapatistas called the convention and the role of the EZLN, Subcommander Marcos reportedly stated it was "not to direct the Mexican people, but to support them, and when it is necessary, to act in their favor.... This convention is to give form to the peaceful struggle for democracy and justice."

Over 5,000 people attended the national gathering as individuals and as representatives of peasant groups, Indian communities, independent labor organizations, students, women, community groups, intellectuals and the Mexican Left. The convention was not limited to electoral politics but involved the many crises facing Mexican society, from education and health, the environment and unemployment, to the question of beginning coalitions among the groups present and beyond.

In the aftermath of the elections, the PRD's demise indicates not so much a splintering of the Left as it does a rejection of Cardenas who in 1988 received support well beyond the Left. This year his platform included acceptance of NAFTA and of Salinas' capitalist "modernization" programs.

As many people disgustingly pointed out during the campaign, the Salinas era increased the number of Mexican billionaires from 2 to 24. The Zedillo era promises

more of the same, but it comes after the Chiapas revolt which has shaken the PRI and the entire entrenched ruling class to its core by raising the actuality of fundamental change throughout Mexico and sparking the emergence of a new opposition. A variety of commentators have characterized this as the birth and maturing of Mexican "civil society," meaning everything from grassroots organizing to reform of the PRI. However, the new consciousness emerging in Mexico is hardly that limited and is in the process of "hearing itself speak."

Rwandan killers protected

Despite military defeat, exile, and exposure before the whole world as organizers of the genocide of up to one million people—most of them ethnic Tutsis—the generals and political leaders of the former Rwandan regime remain to a large extent in control of the refugee camps in Zaire to which several million Hutu civilians have fled. Not only are they and their henchmen virtually running the camps, but they have usually managed to intimidate or, if necessary, murder those Hutu refugees who express the wish to return to Rwanda to live under the new regime. All of this could not be happening without at least the tacit approval of the Zairian regime and the Western powers.

Rwanda human rights activist Allison De Forges has reported that top Rwandan politicians who were responsible for the genocide, such as former Prime Minister Jean Kambanda, were first sheltered in the French-occupied zone of southwestern Rwanda and then helped to flee to Zaire, where for at least a time they were still being driven around by French military chauffeurs.

Virtually no aid is going in for the survivors of the genocide who are trying to rebuild the country on a multiethnic basis. Almost all of the international aid is going instead to the mainly Hutu refugees across the border in Zaire, among whom are hiding some of the worst perpetrators of genocide. "Must we get cholera to be helped?" asked the new Rwandan Prime Minister Faustin Twagiramungu, a Hutu who himself narrowly escaped death because he was a known opponent of the ethnic chauvinism of the former regime.

Northern Ireland ceasefire

Oxford, England—Midnight on Aug. 31 marked the "complete cessation of military operations by the Irish Republican Army (IRA)." This lifts the threat of terrorist bombs in shopping centers and railway stations. More important, it offers a long-awaited possibility of progress towards peace and freedom in "the most distressful country" of Northern Ireland.

The situation that exists in Northern Ireland is a tangled knot of oppression and conflict. The British Army has been there for 25 years, confronting the Catholic/Republican minority as an oppressive occupying power. The indigenous Catholic Irish have been treated as an inferior people ever since Ulster was colonized in the 17th century by Protestant settlers from Scotland and England. Discrimination in employment on grounds of religious affiliation is now against the law, but remains widespread in practice. Key working-class residential districts in Belfast and Derry are effectively segregated along ethnic/religious lines; 25 years of "the Troubles" have driven the communities further apart.

The relatively privileged status that male Protestant workers once enjoyed has been undermined by the recession and restructuring of the global capitalist economy. Many of the skilled jobs in heavy industry which were once reserved for them have disappeared. Both communities suffer from high unemployment, although it is worse for Catholics.

On both sides society and politics are heavily male dominated. The macho gun culture of the paramilitaries has made matters worse. The voices of women are seldom heard in public outside the peace movement.

Sectarianism does not go unchallenged. Large numbers of Protestants and Catholics come together in peace rallies as well as working together in trade unions, the environmental movement and other spheres.

The ceasefire represents an important change in the Republican outlook. There is a growing recognition that a united Ireland can never be achieved by force of arms alone. Even if British troops could be driven out (an unlikely prospect), some form of agreement would have to be reached with the one-million-strong Protestant majority community. Without that, there could be bloodshed on the scale of Bosnia. So at last the long war of the IRA is called off, and Sinn Féin seeks a political solution. People in Republican neighbourhoods came out and celebrated the news with street parties.

The ceasefire was prepared for by a partly secret diplomatic process in which John Hume of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, the Dublin government and the Clinton administration acted as intermediaries between Sinn Féin and John Major's cabinet. While working people in Northern Ireland want peace and a better life, the international ruling class wants stability for capitalism.

In Britain there is a need to overcome the shameful tradition of anti-Irish racism which lurks in the national culture, to raise awareness of how Ireland's troubles past and present have been shaped by conquest, exploitation and domination by Britain, and to transform that into positive solidarity.

—Richard Bunting

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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**'For' the
union, but
not fired up**



by John Marcotte

A guy came down to our job from the Teamsters International to talk to us about organizing non-union workers. He gave us cards to fill out to volunteer to help, to talk to non-union drivers, leaflet and so on. Most, if not all, of the guys here feel favorable to this. It is a very important question.

We know this four-year contract recently signed with the unionized freight companies is just a breathing space. After a month-long strike this spring we did beat back their demand for part-timers at half pay but we still took concessions. We feel the companies are going to go in for the kill next time around.

NON-UNIONS GROWING

Ten years ago there were something like 300,000 freight Teamsters. This spring there were only about 120,000 left from all the deregulation and companies going under. Of these, about 80,000 were on strike. The bottom line is, the strike did not cripple the economy. Most of the freight kept moving with the non-unions. If you can't stop the economy, you have no power. You can hurt your immediate boss, that's it.

The big trucking corporations, and even lots of the smaller ones, have been "double-breasting"—building up non-union subsidiaries and throwing business to them. It could get to a point where a strike might even suit them, because it would tear down their union operations and build up their non-union outfits. If it gets to that point, they will have us where they want us.

(Continued on page 3)

Black World

**Race—
the final
frontier**



by Lou Turner

The continuing voyages of American politics into the racist underpsyche of the American mind has taken this country, this election year, to reactionary depths that even it has never gone to before.

Racism barely disguises itself in the ad campaigns, debates and press releases of predominantly white, middle-class office seekers this year. And the media has reported ad nauseum that this is an objective expression of the country's preoccupation with the crime phenomenon in U.S. cities, schools and homes.

While there has been no end to code names that white America invents to stigmatize Black folk, never has this ideological naming ceremony been as ubiquitous as this election year. There is not an electoral campaign that has not pushed the crime button in the American psyche and not had a Black face come up on the screen.

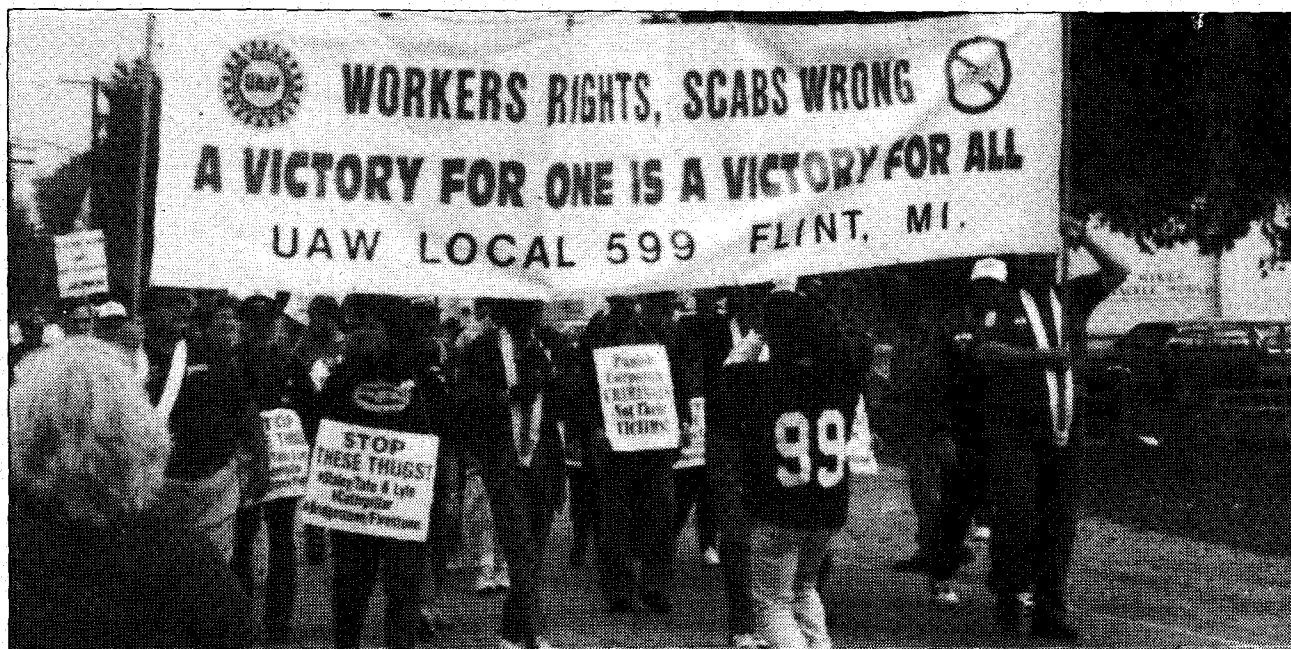
But while House Republican Whip Newt Gingrich and Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole are hot to carry out their "Contract against America" with a call to return to Reaganism, it was actually that "Reagan Democrat" Bill Clinton who paved the way with his \$30 billion Crime Bill. That and the welfare "reform" proposals he unveiled earlier this year represented Clinton's attempt to steal the right-wing Republican agenda.

Consider Bill Clinton's stigmatizing rhetoric before a klavern of police chiefs in New Mexico in mid-October: "...what we must be worried about is wave upon wave of these little children, who don't have somebody both good and strong to look up to, who are so vulnerable that their hearts can be turned to stone by the time they're 10 or 11 years old. And when there is a good one—a 5- or 10-year old kid in difficult circumstances, blooming like a flower in the desert, knowing it's wrong to steal candy—he actually has his life at risk."

Clinton had in mind the story of the 10- and 11-year old youths responsible for the death of a 5-year old youngster, in Chicago recently. Not unlike the demonizing rhetoric of Black people that spews forth from the campaign ads and debates in this year's political races, Clinton invokes the foreboding class images of society being inundated by population flood waves of the poor—not merely of adults, but of their children. The Black ghetto evokes the opposite image, that of a moral desert, utterly lacking in any sense of right or wrong.

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Militant labor actions resist Clinton's state-capitalist agenda



Victorious Buick City auto workers joined thousands marching in Decatur, Ill. against corporate despotisms.

by Jim Mills

Eight thousand embattled union members and their supporters poured into Decatur, Ill., last month. Anchoring the Oct. 15 demonstration and march were workers from A.E. Staley, locked out last year as they resisted contract concessions. Joining them were Decatur Caterpillar workers who walked out June 21 along with 13,000 others in three states, and Firestone-Bridgestone workers, on strike since July 12, who walked off the job with other rubber workers in five other locations.

Each union is locked in a bitter dispute over the conditions of work. The company contract proposals have in common expanded hours, weekend and holiday work, cuts in pay and benefits—in short, a push for total control over the lives of the people making corn products, farm implements and tires.

Members of the three unions, women and men, Black and white, marched shoulder to shoulder through the industrial east side of this working-class city. The militant parade passed by each company's plant one by one in order to break court injunctions limiting no more than a

handful of picketers to each gate. At the Staley site, the marchers dedicated a bridge overpass to workers killed by their jobs. An impromptu rally and sit-in at a street intersection concluded the day's show of defiance against corporate prerogatives to exploit labor.

Elsewhere in the Midwest, 11,500 United Auto Workers at General Motor's colossal Buick City complex in Flint, Mich., scored a rare victory. A four-day strike ending Sept. 30 forced GM to expand the work force by 800 jobs as well as implement a program to reduce repetitive stress injuries. (See "GM knuckles under," page 3.)

And in one of the largest election victories in the South since workers brought a union to J.P. Stevens 20 years ago, workers at Tultex in Martinsville, Va., voted for the Amalgamated Clothing & Textile Workers union.

Indeed, 1994 has seen a resurgence of labor actions. Organizers are seeing workers in the South winning union elections at a 2-to-1 clip. As of the first third of 1994, triple the number of workers had been on strike compared to 1993. Not all actions are officially sanc-

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Eyewitness to China's hollow economic boom

by Xu Wei

Guangzhou—China has undergone great changes in certain aspects, yet in others it stays the same or has become even worse. Almost everyone I talked to for six weeks believes corruption has become incurable. Indeed, corruption has escalated so much that it has become normal: "No official is clean."

I sensed a total disillusionment with the government and the party. Both are rotten within and both have proven incapable of correcting themselves, yet show no signs of giving up power. China's political system remains unchanged. In addition, power and money have become closely intertwined.

SURFACE PROSPERITY

On the surface at least, Southern Canton and major cities look prosperous—despite the homeless beggars (usually old men, women and children). The urban life style has changed. Making money, consumption and enjoyment are key activities. Commodities are plentiful. Clothes and shoes made in China follow closely styles in Hong Kong and the West.

Some urban families have air conditioners; a few free-ways in Canton and Beijing areas, some of them bought and run by Hong Kong tycoons, are already in use. McDonald's, Coca Cola, Pepsi, Estee Lauder, Valentino, expensive foreign wines are quite conspicuous. Every city looks like a huge construction site. Streets are jammed by vehicles, foreign and domestic.

Inflation is high. The price of all necessities has gone up greatly. Luxurious commodities—clothes with foreign labels and better styles—can be as high as a few thousand yuan and are displayed in almost every store. In Beijing, one small pizza and two drinks at Pizza Hut (there are quite a number of McDonald's and Pizza Huts) cost close to 100 yuan. To compare, school teachers make 300-400 yuan a month and many retirees live on less than 300 yuan a month.

Cities are expanding into what were rural areas. This

is most obvious in Southern Canton. The countryside has been virtually replaced by apartment buildings, Western-style houses and shops. Now Guangzhou relies on food supplies from other provinces.

I was not impressed by the "miracle" of China's economic reforms. Shenzhen's industrial areas are full of factories and dormitories for workers—usually peasant girls and boys from the countryside of Sichuan, Jiangxi, Hunan, etc. Many work in factories owned by foreign business. The dormitories are seven or eight stories with balconies. At a brief glimpse they look OK. Yet looking carefully you will find that workers are crowded in small rooms with one big bunk. The walls are stained and windows dust-covered, the balconies are crowded with washed clothes. The dormitories are walled and carefully guarded, identification is required to enter the building and no outsiders are allowed in.

Chinese workers are in a difficult situation. About 60% of state industries are losing money. The problems don't simply lie in management and structures. Forged industrial products are flourishing. Industries on the coast, which were intended to export products, have

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Feminist subjectivity center of debate

by Laurie Cashdan

Editor's note: The letter below responds to comments from a Chicago feminist printed in the October N&L. We invite other readers to join this dialogue.

Thank you for your careful reading of my essay, "Feminism and Marx's humanism reconsidered" (N&L, March 1994). I appreciated your concern with the question of subjectivity and its relation to agency, which I feel is key to whether feminist theory can work out emancipatory possibilities in the retrogressive 1990s.

Raya Dunayevskaya used a phrase in *Philosophy and Revolution* which relates to this question of feminist subjectivity: "The whole point seems to be to hold on to the principle of creativity, and the contradictory process by which creativity develops" (246). Nearly every feminist writing or organizing today would have something to say about that "contradictory process" means to them in the 1990s. My concern is whether we have held tight to the "principle of creativity" which drives this process.

Let me make clear what I mean by creativity and its contradictory process by first referring to a short article published next to your letter, "A voice from the Delta," by Sarah White, a Black woman working in a catfish plant in Mississippi who, along with her sister workers, organized nearly the entire industry. She writes about facing unemployment and welfare lines until catfish processing plants opened on the old cotton plantations:

"We were eager to start work and disband the welfare lines. But the picture that was painted was not so beautiful when we had the chance to look at it again. That new-found feeling of being independent and part of the working society was destroyed in 1981 when the doors of Delta Pride opened."

Elsewhere she has written about the "kill line" of Delta Pride—the spattering of blood, deafening noise, pressure to work faster by shouting fore(women), wages low enough to qualify workers for food stamps. Nothing else so cuts through the ideological oppositions we hear daily—welfare/independence, unemployed/employed—nor so overturns the question of "pride" itself.

Yet many feminist theorists have shifted their concentration away from such creativity and toward what they call "the discursive structuring of subjectivity," by which they mean the historical, social construction of gender and women through discourses—or language.

Many feminist theorists who base themselves on Foucault's concepts of power and knowledge have insisted that discursive theories of subjectivity do not rob women of agency. They see agency taking place within (or in the interstices between) discourses and power relations rather than among individual agents of free will. When you write, "I am not at all convinced that Foucault's claim that discourse also structures subjects 'makes it impossible' to imagine agency," you may have such arguments in mind.

As Joan Scott puts it: "Subjects are constituted discursively, but there are conflicts among discursive systems, contradictions within any one of them, multiple meanings possible for the concepts they deploy. And subjects have agency. They are not unified, autonomous individuals exercising free will, but rather subjects whose agency is created through situations and statuses conferred on them."¹

Increasingly, some feminists have argued that while they agree that subjectivity does not arise from biological or economic sources unmediated by culture, they are not convinced that discursive poststructuralist theories allow them to conceptualize feminist agency or creativity such that it is not a mere reflection of the dominant culture.² Women become the object onto which discourses are mapped in this subject-object reversal.

Indeed, such a subject-object reversal could prove deadly in the 1990s, when racist and sexist ideology

abound but new social movements emerge with great difficulty and then are met with more ideological pollution that limits their scope to pushing the perimeters of existing "free-market" capitalism.

This is why I feel it is urgent to grapple with the way Marxist-Humanism has posed "dialectics of Absolute negativity" in relation to subjects of revolution. I would like to hear your thoughts on Dunayevskaya's 1974 essay, "Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning," reprinted in N&L (October and November 1994).

Dunayevskaya emphasizes that what Hegel called "the patience, seriousness, suffering and the labor of the negative" is needed to work out "a totally new relationship of philosophy to actuality and action"—which includes the actuality of women's movements globally. "Just as the objective world and the elemental quest for universality have a crucial meaning for students of the dialectic," she writes, "so do the students of the dialectic have a crucial meaning for the movement from practice." The contradictory process of creativity in this retrogressive period takes center stage in this view.

1. Joan W. Scott, "Experience," in Judith Butler and Scott, eds., *Feminists Theorize the Political* (1992), p. 34.
2. See Kate Soper, "Productive Contradictions," in Caroline Ramazanoglu, ed., *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism* (1993).

Youth march for choice

New York City—It was raining. There were more cops than demonstrators. I was disappointed because there were only several hundred at the pro-choice demonstration, Oct. 23, against the "right to lifers" who formed a human cross on Fifth Avenue. We were mostly young women in our teens and early twenties. But we sure got attention as we marched all the way to George Pataki's campaign headquarters for governor. We shouted slogans at the top of our lungs in the cold rain and felt excited to be doing something.

How dare they! First they try to control my mind in school, now they want to have a say on my body! These anti-lifers (like our slogan said, "Pro-life, your name's a lie, you don't care if women die!") are more interested in the quantity of life than its quality. Why is it, in religion once you make a mistake, that's it for life? They say, no matter what, you have the child. It reminds me of the book we read in school, *The Scarlet Letter*.

Even though only a few anti-lifers showed up for their own "chain of fools" human cross, it was very scary. You get more aware there are people out there who are trying to break that stepping stone for women down, even kill you like they did the doctor in Pensacola.

And once again, it raises questions of relations between women and religion, men and women, society and women, and class and color in relation to women. That was another disappointment. Why was it mostly white women at this demonstration? —High school student

Adrienne Rich, poetry and revolution

Adrienne Rich's *What Is Found There: Notebooks on Poetry and Politics* (1993) is a profoundly important book, of a kind which only after reading it do you realize how much you needed it. Set at the end of the Cold War and "alleged triumph of corporate capitalism," as Rich puts it, "It reflects the undertaking, by one kind of artist, to see and feel her way to an understanding of her art's responsive and responsible relationship to history, to her contemporaries, and to the future."

At such a moment which, without too much exaggeration, could be said to herald the end of the old poetic cosmos, as all meaning is pulverized into the one single concept of Commodity, Rich reaches back to the origins in "naming." What she finds is our common human world: "This impulse to enter, through language, into the order and disorder of the world, is poetic at its root as surely as it is political at its root."

As opposed to this human world of poetry made by all, there is that actual world of capitalism, brutality and genocide in which poetry finds itself. Rich sets up a small drama, as someone in the midst of a domestic violence incident turns on her car radio and hears Wallace Stevens reading "The house was quiet and the world was calm." Without negating the beauty in Stevens, the need for something more, for new poetry, becomes clear.

Rich returns to Stevens and her relation to his verse. He is first her "liberator" in the music of language, and only later can she come to terms with the casual racism in many of his poems, which she sees as part of a "mass imaginative failure" also part of her own childhood, "the vast encircling presumption of whiteness."

Against this background, Rich notes the significance of dozens of other voices which have arisen since the '60s. The chance to find their work here must mirror the revelatory power which hearing them first had on her. Particularly moving are the remembrances of Audre Lorde and Arturo Islas, and of first reading and hearing Judy Grahn.

Rich writes of the '60s, "I could feel around me—in the city, in the country at large—the 'spontaneity of the masses' (later I would find the words in Rosa Luxemburg) and this was powerfully akin to the experience of writing poetry." New voices in poetry and life helped Rich find her own new poetic voice.

When she uses this vision to rethink political art as it was known in past revolutions, as well as to confront the present moment, the result is most exciting:

I did not want the current times, with their images of falling walls and slogans about a "new world order," to wash out for me all continuity with revolutions of the past and the hopes they had touched in so many nerves.

Brazil's new unionists

New York City—Brazilian sociologist Mary Garcia Castro spoke on women, gender and labor unions in Brazil and the U.S. at the Barnard College Center for Research on Women, Sept. 14. She described "class-based feminism" as transforming Brazilian unions in the last decade, due to the doubling of women in the labor force and women's leadership roles in strikes. Brazil has also seen a "reaching in strategy" to change unions by changing men. Some unions now deal with the "totality of workers' lives," including love and homophobia.

Men participate in these changes because women have been so tough in strikes and have led union organization of domestic workers, the landless and others.

Although many women have entered the labor force, 37% are self-employed or part-time, so women's first demand is still entry into the formal job market. Sexual harassment, outlawed last year but still widespread, health problems from working conditions, and unequal pay are other major issues. Reproductive rights is another—35% of poor women are sterilized, and proof of sterilization is required to get many jobs.

Castro sees the changes within unions as part of a new labor movement which emerged since the end of the 1970s with women as a new "subject." This movement has taken the forms of neighborhood associations, mothers' organizations, liberation theology, rebellion against traditional union hierarchies and grassroots women's movements. Community and labor groups worked together in the fight against the pre-1976 dictatorship, she said, and it is natural for them to work together now to fight the rising cost of living.

While gender is addressed by unions, Castro said, race is not. In the banking industry, Black women hold all the lowest paid jobs. Labor unions say racism is the province of the Black movement and do nothing about it. Castro contrasted Brazilian "class-based feminism" to the "legal-institutional approach" she found in the U.S. unions she studied. I suggested that "class-based feminism" could be found in the U.S. in the new community-based workers' centers and self-organization of women that N&L has reported recently.

—Anne Jaclard



Women labor at 'Brazilian nut factory.'

I knew that for Marx himself, Communism had never meant less than the means for freeing human creativity in all persons to the fullest: he believed that the release of that very creativity would ensure that no revolution turned in on itself, stagnated, and froze; that in "revolution in permanence," "new passions and new forces" would repeatedly arise as the creative currents of each and all found voice.

For Rich, "it's as if the process of poetry itself temporarily releases me into that realm of human power which Marx said is its own end." Such an integrated vision of poetry and revolution is rare and precious—and I'm not sure if there is, anywhere, a more articulate example of it. The book should become a vital part of today's battle of ideas—for instance, over multiculturalism and the "canon." In her own development as poet and human being Rich embodies both continuity with the past and necessary discontinuity which allows new voices and a new world to arise.

—Gerard Emmett

Women of color left out

Chicago—When I signed up for a class on race and gender at my university, I assumed we would be discussing both together. The class has definitely proved me wrong. First we discussed race. Now we're discussing gender without race.

When we discussed race, all we discussed was biased research that scientists used to support arguments that African Americans were inferior to Euro-Americans. We talked about craniometry.

In the gender section we've read Simone De Beauvoir and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and now we're reading bell hooks' *Ain't I a Woman*. But we discussed her last chapters first and skipped over her first three chapters on the devaluation of African-American women and how we're seen as sex objects. We actually haven't talked about African-American women. The professor asked whether domestic work is demeaning because women do it or because it's service work, and all the white women started talking about their personal experiences at home.

We viewed a film in class called "Ways of Seeing." The film only addressed Euro-American women. I made the point that to discuss women's issues, you have to address all women...women of color. I said I had a problem with trying to discuss issues without acknowledging other cultures. No one acknowledged what I said and they continued on with their class discussion. I put my books into my backpack and walked out of the classroom.

—African-American woman college student

Haitian woman of courage

Los Angeles—On Oct. 4, I went to hear Alerte Balance, called the "woman of courage" in her native land. She had been dismembered and tortured by the Haitian paramilitary force FRAHP. Her nose, ear, tongue and forearm were chopped off with a machete.

Her husband had been an active supporter of Aristide, and the FRAHP thugs had come to their house in the middle of the night to search him out. Alerte heard their approach and told her husband to leave. When the soldiers entered they grabbed her and carted her away, leaving her three small children crying alone in the darkness.

After hacking at her and chopping her up, the FRAHP forces left her for dead on top of a heap of corpses. But the strength of her courage and spirit kept her alive. The next morning she crawled to the roadside. She was taken to a hospital, and eventually applied for and received political asylum in the U.S. The U.S. government told her not to speak out about Haiti and what happened to her.

In the U.S., she received no medical attention for three months. She lived in a homeless shelter. Only recently, with the help of groups such as the Haitian Action Network, which sponsored her talk in L.A., has she been able to support herself. She stood before us, small and stout in stature, with a brilliant red and violet scarf encompassing her gentle face; her eyes were glowing, dark and bright.

Before her talk, a Haitian man sang a song of freedom in a piercing voice that rang through the church and filled us with sadness and hope. Afterwards, a young Black man said he was part of the gang truce between the Crips and the Bloods. "We identify with your struggle," he said. "We feel that your struggle there and our struggle here are one."

—Kim

Mississippi: a tale of three catfish plants

Belzoni, Miss.—You can win union recognition at a plant, but unless you really have a union of the members, it doesn't mean much. At the Simmons catfish plant in Yazoo City, Mr. Simmons, the owner, is still the law, the total boss of the plant. He sits in his big house on the hill behind the plant and he rules it, just like it was with the old cotton plantations.

Our union, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1529, won an election to represent Simmons workers, but after years of intimidation and firings, people are afraid to talk to union representatives. Most of the 200 workers are not union members and don't pay union dues. There is no effective steward system in the plant.

Mr. Simmons loans money to individual workers. People say: Don't make trouble and Mr. Simmons will take care of you. There are crowded and unsafe conditions all over the plant, especially on the kill line. Each time a worker needs to use the bathroom, she has to clock out and then back in. The plant manager has been firing workers any time he feels like it, and he talks to them like dirt.

What makes me so angry is that here we have a union, but the way of thinking really hasn't changed. The plantation mentality has workers in its grip. When it gets hold of you, you have no life or mind of your own.

The Delta Pride plant in Belzoni is a very different kind of plant, nothing like Simmons, but it still has problems. It is a very smooth-running operation. The job standards are not a big problem. The management has learned not to abuse workers.

At the same time the contract is not being followed. There are "little things" like the aprons. When you get a hole in one, the contract says you are supposed to get another one. At Belzoni, you don't get one; you try to tape the old one, and you get fish guts on your clothes. Then there are big things, like the way workers get written up for "abusing" bathroom time. The contract says that they have to prove it, but they are disciplining people without any proof, up to three days off.

Why isn't the union stronger at the Belzoni plant, when it is the same company, the same contract, the same union local as at the big Delta Pride plant in Indianola? I am trying to figure it out. The Belzoni plant got the union in 1991, after the big Delta Pride strike was over. They didn't have to struggle with the old management. They didn't have a testing of fire like the workers at the Indianola plant had. Do you have to go through that to be strong?

What I want to say to the workers at Belzoni is that the struggle for respect at Delta Pride is an ongoing battle, a way of life. If they know you have gone to sleep, they will eat through the foundations of the union like termites in a building.

The Belzoni contract is the next one coming up, in October 1995. We need to get total support and unity from all the Delta Pride plants and, really, from all the catfish plants in Mississippi. We are the only ones who can

change our lives, and to do that we have to develop our minds. We have to believe in the dream and teach our kids to believe.

—Union activist, Local 1529

Indianola, Miss.—We didn't get the wages we wanted in the last contract, but we are trying to make sure that everything else we got at the main Delta Pride plant is strictly enforced. I am a steward and my policy is: "Never knuckle under to a supervisor. Go by the contract, by the book." This will only work if the great majority of the workers in the plant are union members and if the members all stand up for themselves.

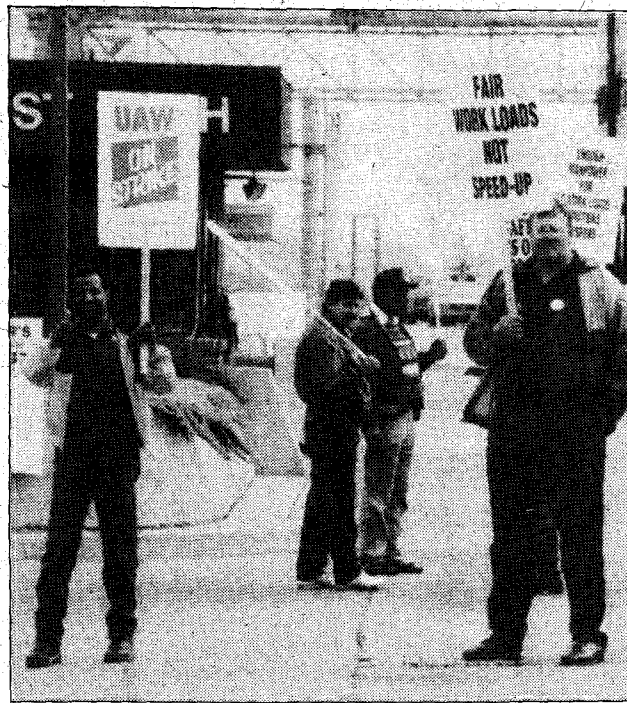
My view is that we will respect the supervisors and we expect them to respect us. If they disrespect us and violate our rights, they know that we will file a grievance. Most of the time now we don't have to grieve; they want to solve it before a grievance is filed. No recent grievances have gone to arbitration.

The contract says that we get a break every two hours, not whenever the supervisor feels like it. They had been working us 10 or 15 minutes over. Now we are telling them it has to be within five minutes of the two hours. On the kill line, we are watching the speed. We say: "Work at a normal pace. Do what your body allows." We don't want any more crippling injuries.

Everyone is back from layoff. We are up to about 1,200 workers in the plant. Around Labor Day there was a lot of overtime while people were still laid off. We told the company to cut that out, to bring back the laid-off workers instead. And they did.

—Steward

GM knuckles under



Flint, Mich.—On Sept. 27, 11,500 members of United Auto Workers Local 599 went on strike over health and safety issues, work standards, movement of work to outside companies and, most importantly, a demand that General Motors hire new employees to relieve overworked auto workers. Those involved in the strike had been working 50-60 hours per week. Some 4,000 outstanding health and safety grievances were on the table.

After a four-day strike that nearly shut down General Motors' North American vehicle assembly operations, GM capitulated and agreed to hire over 800 permanent employees from a pool of approximately that many former employees in the Flint and Pontiac area. On Sept. 25, GM had averted a strike at the 1,200-employee Fisher Guide plant near Flint by agreeing to hire 118 former auto workers.

The strike affected the Buick City complex, the V-6 engine plant and several smaller plants. The Buick City complex is the sole source for torque converters used in most General Motors automatic transmissions. This is what threatened to shut down all GM North American vehicle assembly. As it was, plants in Ste. Therese, Quebec; Lansing and Pontiac, Mich.; Linden, N.J. and Shreveport, La. were shut down by the strike.

The 50- and 60-hour work weeks were accompanied by an absentee rate of 10%, including workers on sick leave. The absenteeism in turn caused General Motors to use more overtime. In spite of dramatic improvements in productivity, GM remains behind Ford and Chrysler in that respect. General Motors was trying to bring itself into the 21st century on the backs of its workers.

GM has reduced its hourly employees from 300,000 to 247,000 since December 1991, which exceeds its target of 250,000 hourly employees by 1995. Adding less than 1,000 workers may seem to be a drop in the bucket compared to a loss of 53,000 jobs, not to mention the massive reductions in the 1980s. The real importance of the added workers is that General Motors was challenged and beaten within four days.

Local 599 president Dave Yettaw was, unfortunately, quoted by the Flint Journal as saying that "slowing down the line speed was no issue, we wanted jobs for the workers." In reality, both of these are issues, as is a whole lot more.

—Dan B.

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Temping can kill

Chicago—Four workers were killed and five seriously injured on Chicago's Edens Expressway, Monday, Oct. 3, when the steering failed on the van taking them to a factory in Libertyville, Ill. The preceding Friday I had been a passenger in a van carrying workers along the same route. That van is among a small fleet belonging to a temporary agency.

The driver's pay arrangement is generally a flat fee per route or per passenger. In the former, the agency's interest is for the driver to get the most done in the fewest routes, to assign a number of workers in excess of the vehicle's seating capacity. In the latter, this interest is extended to the driver as well. For each day the agency deducts about \$3 from the worker's wages.

That Friday I found myself pressed between the seat and side door of the van, the driver racing past cars on the expressway. I was thinking how I might be killed in the next few moments, never having known what kind of work had me inside this vehicle.

The agency makes a policy of not telling workers what a new assignment entails. Shortly after I began at the agency, an administrator needed signatures on paper work for a new contract and took a few of us along for the first day on the job. On the way I asked what we'd be doing at the company. "What's it matter?" he replied. "Work is work, right?"

All concrete labors have been reduced to one abstract, congealed mass; to the increasing sector of "temporary general laborers" this is as obvious as receiving the same poverty wage whatever variety of production one is drafted into today. Regularly exploited by continually changing employers, one detests them on an individual basis and comes to oppose them as a class.

The other day I heard a worker at the agency's office telling another to expect only one 20-minute break in the impending eight-hour shift. Gesturing as if wringing out a wash rag, he said, "They squeeze you for everything you're worth." The other frowned and shrugged his shoulders, "They all do that."

This experience is brought into dialogue with that of company employees. "Y'know," said one temporary worker at my previous assignment, "everywhere I've been, the workers are complaining about their management."

—Tesla Coil

Somerville Mills in contempt

Somerville, Tenn.—Somerville Mills has been found in contempt of court because they did not comply with the judge's ruling to bargain in good faith and to make the workers whole in the back pay that they owe them. Also we are getting ready to go to court on Oct. 31 for an EEOC charge where the company discriminatorily built the women's bathroom open to the plant—there's no door, no wall. The men have always had a door.

The company gave us a big raise trying to undermine the union, Furniture Workers Local 282. We took the raise, and we still didn't vote the union out. So then the company reduced our money that we make on our tickets per dozen that we sew [piece-rate] and raised the quota that we have to produce [for the base rate] so we couldn't make more money. It was bad faith bargaining for them to do that because the union was already in.

This EEOC thing is going to light a fire under their feet, because they never thought we could go that far. The plant manager, his assistant, all the men, they would just walk up in there. We had no privacy in our bathroom, no privacy at all. The company's alibi is that there was so much theft. When the company built that plant, they didn't know if there was going to be theft in there or not. They just did it where they could keep an eye on the women. I feel good that EEOC is taking us seriously.

Sometimes we do literature to bring the workers up to date on things and what else is still pending at the Labor Board. We do one-on-one where we go to the new workers, try and make them feel comfortable, and ask them to join the union and get involved. We take time to educate them on what's going on and why we feel the need of the union. That's been working real well. At one time they were too afraid to listen or stand there and be seen talking with somebody involved in the union. So that's a plus for us even though we're not getting the cards signed right now.

—Black woman activist

Organizing S.F. sweatshops

San Francisco—We are ILGWU organizers picketing San Francisco Knitworks. There's no strike going on because there's no union yet. We're asking dealers and distributors not to do business with this company because the owner is harassing the workers and us, trying to keep a union vote, which was already scheduled once but then canceled, from happening. There are about 80 workers here, and the boss illegally tells them the company is going broke, so don't even think about organizing a union.

We have had success in stopping Yellow Freight company from picking up stuff because they're union, but the company has just shifted to a non-union carrier called EFL. These guys have been crossing the line every day. They tell me their supervisor threatens to fire them if they don't pick up the orders.

We're trying to get our foot in the door. Eighty-five to 90% of the sweatshops in San Francisco are not union. The majority of them are piecework. S.F. Knitworks is actually one of the few who pay hourly wages, which run from the minimum up to about \$5.50 an hour. Piecework means that if the rate is good and you're a fast worker, you might make \$7 or \$8 an hour. In smaller shops, in some of the back alley places in Chinatown, it means many workers are getting \$10 a day.

—Picketeer

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

Why is it important to be union? It is not just the pay, though that is important. We have a lot of protection from our contract. We have the right to follow our work in any change of operations. We have seniority protection, which means no favoritism. They cannot discipline us for productivity. That is a safety and health question when you are doing heavy work, and dealing with traffic and weather conditions. We have the right to refuse unsafe equipment. We cannot be forced or pressured to break Department of Transportation rules, such as driving too many hours. The list goes on.

So if we are "for" the union, how come we're not fired up and breaking down the doors to go out and organize others? Maybe a story from my job helps explain this. We work for a small regional trucking company which, though under the national master freight agreement, also has a "white paper," a side agreement. For example, we make 50¢ less, we don't have a Teamster pension, and so on.

WORKERS AS BYSTANDERS

This is a company that's growing, that got away without a strike by signing a "me too" agreement, which we feel they aren't living up to by insisting on this white paper. They're abusing the contract, but we don't have any say in the negotiations. We have no voice. Only we hear the union delegate tell us "it doesn't look good." We had this company on the run at the time of the national strike, and now "it doesn't look good"? We can't understand that.

Now, the union got a tentative agreement with the company about two months ago, and they "can't" tell us what's in it. Management knows what's in it, the local knows, the International knows—but they "can't" tell us, the guys who have to work under it, until the morning that we vote on it! Do they think we are stupid, we are children, that we can't be trusted to discuss this agreement intelligently? Why the secrecy? Is it that bad? This is supposed to be our union, and we are just bystanders to the whole process.

At the very least this is plain stupid unionism, to say you want to get the rank and file involved in building the union and then you treat them this way. Yes, we are all for unionizing. But when you get treated this way by your own union, maybe it takes the guts out of it. It cuts the ground out from under your feet to go out there and be enthusiastic.

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

Editor's Note

We proudly present the second part of Raya Dunayevskaya's lecture to the Hegel Society of America, originally titled "Hegel's Absolute Idea as New Beginning." The paper was delivered twenty years ago on November 8, 1974, at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

In the first part, reprinted in the October 1994 N&L, the author begins a "step by step" analysis of the 27 paragraphs that comprise the "The Absolute Idea," the final chapter of Hegel's *Science of Logic* (SL). "To be swept up by the dialectic is to experience a plunge to freedom," she writes, and continues with a discussion on Hegel's dialectic method in the thought of Karl Marx and V.I. Lenin.

Our reprinting this pivotal presentation is intended to foster the broadest dialogue on the dialectics of organization and philosophy as well as perspectives for News and Letters Committees. We welcome your comments.

The reprint here can be found in **The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development**, microfilm number 11535. Readers can obtain a copy of the whole lecture by sending \$1.85 to News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren, #707, Chicago IL 60605.

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

We will take up the illumination the actual movement from practice (these past two decades) sheds on the problematic of our day at the end of this study. Here it is necessary to resume Hegel's own concentration on and development of "second negativity" in those last 12 paragraphs of Absolute Idea.

(3) Beginning with paragraph 15, and all the way to the end of the chapter, we no sooner face the subjectivity that has overcome opposition between Notion and Reality than we learn that, since this subjective is the "innermost," it is also the "most objective moment" (SL 835-6), and it is this subjectivity as objectivity which is "subject, a person, a free being." Clearly, free creative power assures the plunge to freedom. It is the unifying force of the Absolute Idea. And since absolute negativity, the new foundation, is not "something merely picked up, but something deduced and proved" (SL 838), this subjectivity could not but be objective, so much so that it extends to the **system itself**.

There too we learn that the content belongs to the method, is the **extension of method** so that the system, too, is but another "fresh beginning" which has been arrived at through an infinite remembrance of things past and advance signposts (*Weitergehen*). This is why the discussion in paragraphs 20 through 25 not only never departs from absolute negativity as the transcending mediation, but shows that every advance in the system of totality becomes "richer and more concrete."

The expression, "richer and more concrete," no more than the categories of subjectivity, reason, freedom, may not have led the reader to think of any such "materialistic" movement as the movement by which man **makes** himself free, but here is how Hegel spells out "Free Mind" in **The Philosophy of Mind** of his *Encyclopaedia of Philosophic Sciences:*

When individuals and nations have once got in their heads the abstract concept of full-blown liberty, there is nothing like it in its uncontrollable strength, just because it is the very essence of mind, and that as its very actuality...The Greeks and Romans, Plato and Aristotle, even the Stoics did not have it...

If to be aware of the Idea—to be aware, that is, that men are aware of freedom as their essence, aim and object—is a matter of **speculation**, still this very Idea itself is the actuality of men—not something which they **have**, as men, but which they **are**. (*Encyclopaedia*, paragraph 482)

The fact that, in the *Science of Logic*, the stages in dialectical advance are not shown as so many stages in the historic development of human freedom, but, in the end, unwind as a circle, become a circle of circles, is, however, a constant reminder that every absolute is a new beginning, has a before and an after; if not a "future," surely a consequence, a "successor"—or, expressed more accurately, **has only the antecedent and indicates its successor** in its conclusion." (SL 842) Whatever Hegel said, and meant, about the Owl of Minerva spreading its wings only at dusk simply does not follow from the **objectivity** of the drive, the **summation** in which the advance is immanent in the present. While he neither gave, nor was interested in, any blueprints for the future, he was not preoccupied with death, the "end" of philosophy, much less of the world. His philosophy is "the end" only in the sense that "up to this moment" philosophy has reached this point with "my" philosophy of absolute negativity. From the beginning, when his first and greatest elemental work, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, ended with nothing short of the Golgotha of the Spirit, Hegel had succeeded in describing the final act as if it were an unfolding of the everlasting. When subjected to the dialectic method from which, according to Hegel, no truth can escape, the conclusion turns out to be a new beginning. There is no trap in thought. Though it is finite, it breaks through the barriers of the given, reaches out, if not to infinity, surely beyond the historic moment.

In the final two paragraphs we see that there is no rest for the Absolute Idea, the fulfilled Being, the Notion that comprehends itself: the Notion that has become the Idea's own

Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning

content. The negativity, the urge to transcend, the ceaseless motion will go into new spheres and sciences and first then achieve "absolute liberation." The absolute liberation experienced by the Absolute Idea as it "freely releases itself" does not make it ascend to heaven. On the contrary, it first then experiences the shock of recognition, "the **externality of space and time** existing absolutely in its own without the moment of subjectivity." (SL 843)

So much for those who consider that Hegel lived far away from the concrete objective world, in some distant ivory tower in which he "deduced" Nature from the Idea. Equally wrong, however, are those who, while recognizing that Hegel presents the transition to Nature as an actual process of reality, conclude that Hegel is standing on his head. Proud as Hegel might have been of the feat, we need to turn both to the *Science of Logic* and the *Philosophy of Mind*, especially the three final syllogisms, to see what Hegel was telling us.

What was an intimation in the *Logic* about Nature being the mediation is spelled out as the first syllogism at the end of the *Encyclopaedia*: Logic-Nature-Mind. In that paragraph Hegel further assures us that "Nature, standing between Mind and its essence, sunders them, not indeed to extremes of finite abstraction, nor stands aloof from them." (*Encyclopaedia*, paragraph 575)

One of the most relevant of the scholarly studies of the 1960s is Reinhart Klemens Maurer's *Hegel und das Ende der Geschichte: Interpretationen zur Phänomenologie*. He

holds that it may very well be true that the first of these final syllogisms (in paragraph 575), which has Nature as the mediation, gives the appearance that "Hegel turns to Darwin, turns to dialectical materialism and other nature-geneses of man," and also means to turn "to Liberty," there leading the "course of necessity," but Hegel himself brings in a "correction" in his next paragraph. Here the sequence reads: Nature-Mind-Logic [paragraph 576]. Professor Maurer then proceeds to "appropriate" that syllogism as expressing the dialectic of the *Phenomenology*. Whatever one may think of that analysis as a philosophy of history or whatever, the point most Hegel scholars do agree with regarding the final syllogism (paragraph 577) is this, in Otto Pöggeler's words of 1961: "In opposition to the usual interpretations of the Hegelian text, I should like to propose the following: that the actual science of Spirit is not the Logic, but the philosophy of Spirit."

Thus the focus of the third syllogism has shifted and the stress has been correctly placed on the fact the Logic has been replaced and, in its stead, we get, not the sequential but the **consequential Self-Thinking Idea**. To Hegel this has resulted from the fact that "it is the nature of the fact, the notion, which causes the movement and development, yet this same movement is equally the action of cognition." (*Encyclopaedia*, paragraph 577)

Hegel's Absolutes never were a series of ascending ivory towers. Revolutionary transformation is immanent in the very form of thought. As we saw from the chapter on Absolute Idea, the unifying force was free creative power. By the time we reach the mediated final result, Absolute Mind, the absolute negativity that was the moving force in Logic, in Nature, in Geist where we saw them as concrete stages of human freedom, there no longer was any difference between theory and practice. This is why our age can best understand Hegel's Absolute. It has been witness to a **movement from practice** for two long decades (ever since the death of Stalin lifted the incubus from the heads of the masses in East Europe). To this writer, Hegel's genius is lodged in the fact that his "voyage of discovery" becomes one endless process of discovery for us. The "us" includes both Marx's new continent of thought of materialist dialectics, and Hegel scholars, as well as the movement from practice that was itself a form of theory once its spontaneity discovered the power of thought along with its physical might. This writer has followed very closely this movement of revolt ever since June 17, 1953, and saw in it a quest for universality because she had already discerned in the dialectical movement of the three final syllogisms in Absolute Mind a new point of departure in the Idea and in the movement from practice.⁹

This movement from practice hardly had the ear of contemporary Hegelians, orthodox or Marxist, as evidenced in the erudite, leftist director of the famous Frankfurt School, the late Theodor Adorno. His very reason for being, for thinking, for acting, was Dialectics, that is to say, for negations of what is. He entitled the summation of his life's thought, his intellectual legacy, *Negative Dialectics*.¹⁰ This book, however, has little to do with the dialectics of negativity, and least with the concept of Subject, by which Hegel distinguished his view from all other philosophers who left the search for truth at Substance only. As "concretized" by Marx for the proletarian class, Subject is supposed to have been accepted also by Adorno, but again, Adorno keeps his

distance and originality locked up in what he calls **Negative Dialectics**. From the very beginning of the Preface of his work (page xix), Adorno informs us that the positive in the negative—"the negation of the negation"—is the enemy: "This book seeks to free dialectics from such affirmative traits without reducing its determinacy." The so-called "theoretical inadequacies of Hegel and Marx" revolve around what he sees as the all-encompassing evil, the concept, that "subsuming cover," its "autarchy."¹¹

Naturally, Adorno keeps his distance from "positivists" and the vulgarisms of the knighted Karl Popper and his infamous "Hegel and Fascism" school. Nevertheless, Adorno, almost out of nothing, suddenly brings in Auschwitz and introduces some sort of kinship between it and absolute negativity. He writes: "Genocide is the absolute integration...Auschwitz confirmed the philosopheme of pure identity as death...Absolute negativity is in plain sight and has ceased to surprise anyone."¹²

By "almost out of nothing," I naturally do not mean that Auschwitz was not the reality of Fascism, nor do I mean only the suddenness and shock of introducing such subject matter in the climax of a book called "Meditations on Metaphysics." Rather, I mean it is wrong. That is to say, it is totally illogical and non-dialectical, considering that Adorno devoted an adult lifetime to fighting fascist ideology as the very opposite of Hegelian dialectics and had seen the very death of dialectics in Nazi Germany. Perhaps a better word than

"wrong" would be Adorno's own curse-word "naive." I mean that as late as 1957, in his *Aspects of the Hegelian Dialectic*, he almost defended a subject-object identity.

Subject-object cannot be dismissed as mere extravagance of logical absolutism...In seeing through the latter as mere subjectivity, we have already passed beyond the Speculative idealism...Cognition, if it is genuine, and more than simple duplication of the subjective, must be the subject's objectivity.

And, indeed, in his *Negative Dialectics*, he reiterates the same idea when he writes that, despite the fact that Hegel "deifies" subjectivity, "he accomplishes the opposite as well, an insight into the subject as a self-manifesting objectivity."¹³

Why, then, such a vulgar reduction of absolute negativity? Therein is the real tragedy of Adorno (and the

Frankfurt School). It is the tragedy of a one-dimensionality of thought which results when you give up Subject, when one does not listen to the voices from below—and they were loud, clear, and demanding between the mid-fifties and mid-sixties. It is a tragedy once one returns to the ivory tower and reduces his purpose to "the purpose of discussing key concepts of philosophic disciplines and centrally intervening in those disciplines."¹⁴ The next step was irresistible, the substitution of a permanent critique not alone for absolute negativity, but also of "permanent revolution itself."

Now, whether the enduring relevance of Hegel has stood the test of time because of the devotion and analytical rigor of Hegel scholars, or because a movement of freedom surged up from below and was followed by new cognition studies, there is no doubt that **because** Absolute Negativity signifies transformation of reality, the dialectic of contradiction and totality of crises, the dialectic of liberation, Hegel's thought comes to life at critical points of history, called by him "birth-times of history." In addition, there were Marxist scholars, revolutionary dissidents, who built on new ground. While a scholar from the West, like Reinhart Maurer, was preoccupied with Hegel's concept of where to end, the Czechoslovakian philosopher, Karel Kosik, was preoccupied with where to begin anew. Of the Eastern European studies that accompanied the revolts and revolved around Marx's Humanism, especially Marx's "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," one of the most rigorous studies was Karel

(Continued on page 5)



Raya Dunayevskaya

9. The letters on the Absolute Idea and the three final syllogisms of Absolute Mind (dated May 12 and May 20, 1953). I have turned over to the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs at Wayne State University in Detroit. These comprise part of the collection on **Marxist-Humanism, its Origin and Development in America, 1941-1975** [now called **Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development**]. They are available on microfilm for other libraries and are listed as "The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection." [The 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" are now available in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (Chicago: News & Letters, 1989).]
10. The original German edition was published in 1966. Quotations will be made from the English translation by E. B. Ashton published in 1973 by the Seabury Press of New York.
11. Adorno's accusation of "conceptual fetishism" against Marx's famous "Fetishism of Commodities" as "truly a piece from the heritage of classic German philosophy" (page 189, footnote) is not relevant here. Contrast it with Karel Kosik's analysis of the very same section in a work described below in footnote 15.
12. *Negative Dialectics*, page 362.
13. *Negative Dialectics*, page 350.
14. *Negative Dialectics*, page xx in Preface.

Hegel's Absolute

(Continued from page 4)

Kosik's *The Dialectics of the Concrete*.¹⁵

Nor were these serious studies limited to the "East."¹⁶ As Frantz Fanon saw it, the African struggle for freedom was "not a treatise on the universal, but the untidy affirmation of an original idea propounded as an absolute."¹⁷ There is no doubt, of course, that once action supersedes the subjectivity of purpose, the unity of theory and practice is the form of life out of which emerge totally new dimensions. To this writer, this is only the "proof" of the ending of the **Science of Logic**, the absolute as new beginning, the self-bringing forth of liberty. Because Hegel's great work had new horizons in sight, Nature and Spirit, the Absolute Idea had to undergo "absolute liberation" (*Befreiung*). No mere transition (*Übergang*) here; Freedom is unrestricted. It will "complete" (*vollendet*) its liberation in the **Philosophy of Mind** (*Geist*). But there is no doubt either in the **Science of Logic** about the Notion being Subject, being Reality, and not some sort of closed ontology. To think that Hegel referred only to the idea of Christianity in the Graeco-Roman world when he wrote about "the pivot on which the impending world revolution turned at that time"¹⁸ is both to forget the Christians thrown to the lions, and that it was the "resigned" Hegel of the *Philosophie des Rechts* [*Philosophy of Right*] who wrote about the "impending world revolution" and not the young Hegel who had earlier toasted the great French Revolution.

Is it mere accident that, after 150 years of indifference, two simultaneous translations of the **Philosophy of Nature** appeared in English? Or is it mere accident that in the new studies on Hegel, a thinker like Professor Riedel suddenly sees in Hegel an equal primacy of the Theoretical and the Practical Idea? Or that new studies in Hegel cover East and West, North and South, and that many of the world conferences on Hegel coincide with Marx and Lenin as philosophers? Is it not rather that the problematic of our crisis-ridden world impinges in no incidental way on the whole question of the relationship of theory to practice not just on the immediate level, but one grounded in philosophy? No doubt, as Hegel put it, to accept a category at face value is an "uninstructed and barbarous procedure." But it is also a fact that the single dialectic process surges up from thought as well as from actuality. It would be equally "uninstructed" for philosophers to act as if the relationship of theory to practice is merely a "job for politicians." Just as the objective world and the elemental quest for universality have a crucial meaning for students of the dialectic, so do the students of the dialectic have a crucial meaning for the movement from practice. Just as the movement from the abstract universal to the concrete individual through the particular, **necessitates** a double negation (and that, after all, comprises the whole movement of the **Science of Logic**), so does the "comprehension" of it. If philosophers learn to eschew elitisms, then the unity of theory and practice, of absolute as new beginning, will not remain an abstract desire, or mere will, but philosophy itself will become action.

In his *Hegel: A Re-examination*, Professor Findlay was right when he stated that Hegel's exegeses can seem "arid and false to those who see nothing mysterious and god-like in the facts of human thought." But is it not equally true that philosophers who stand only in terror before revolution not only do not "comprehend" it, they cannot fully comprehend the revolution **In thought**? And Hegel did revolutionize philosophy. Absolute Idea as new beginning can become a new "subjectivity" for realizing Hegel's principle, that "the transcendence of the opposition between Notion and Reality, and that unity which is truth, rest upon this subjectivity alone." This is not exactly a summons to the barricades, but Hegel is asking us to have our ears as well as our categories so attuned to the "Spirit's urgency" that we rise to the challenge of working out, through "patience, seriousness, suffering and the labor of the negative," a totally new relationship of philosophy to actuality and action as befits a "birth-time of history." This is what makes Hegel a contemporary.

15. Two of the chapters of his *Dialectics of the Concrete* have been published in English in *Telos* (Fall 1968 and Fall 1969). While in the second issue, Kosik contrasts the empty absolutes of Schelling with those of Hegel, who characterized the absolutes of the Romantics as having got to the Absolute "like a shot out of the pistol," in the earlier, 1968 issue, Kosik wrote that Marx's beginning of *Capital* with "Commodity" means "it can be characterized in Hegelian terms, as the unity of being and non-being, of distinction and similarity, of identity and non-identity. All further determinations and richer definitions are characterizations of this 'absolute' of capitalist society. The dialectic of interpretation or of exegesis cannot eclipse the central problem: How does science reach the **necessary beginning of the exposition**....The dialectic is not a method of reduction, but the **method of spiritual and intellectual reproduction of reality**." [Kosik's book has since been translated into English in its entirety under the same title, *Dialectics of the Concrete* (Dordrecht: Syntheses Library, 1976)].

The only one in the academic world in Hegel studies in the West who has dealt seriously, not with **existing, given**, established, **state** Communism, but with Marx himself and sees the transformation of the commodity as phenomenon into Notion is Karl Löwith in his *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, translated by David Green (New York: 1964). The original German edition appeared in 1941 as *Von Hegel bis Nietzsche* (Zurich: 1953).

16. I have limited myself to Eastern Europe, but of course I really mean the East, the Orient, and Mao's perversion of Hegelian dialectics, especially the concept of Contradiction, with which I have dealt elsewhere. See Chapter Five, "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung," in my *Philosophy and Revolution*, pages 128-150.

17. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, page 33.

18. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, translated by Sir T.M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942). Preface, page 10. See also the translator's note Number 26 on page 301.

Editorial

No to U.S. grip on Haitian life

The problems confronting the Haitian masses and Jean-Bertrand Aristide, now that he has returned to resume the work they had overwhelmingly elected him to do three years ago, are formidable. It is not only the depth of the poverty in that land where three-fourths of the seven million population are unemployed, malnutrition is rampant, only one in four can read, and the great majority live without electricity, telephones, a sewage system or even roads. Whatever infrastructure Aristide had begun to put into operation, before the coup sent him into exile, was systematically destroyed and is now virtually non-existent.

Yet what confronts Aristide today is not only this great worsening of all the enormous problems Haiti faced three years ago but the political and economic straitjacket in which the U.S. is attempting to tie him as the condition for his return. That straitjacket—called "Strategy of Social and Economic Reconstruction"—was presented last August in Paris to those who would be funding \$800 million over the next 15 months for the "reconstruction"—primarily the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as well as the U.S., France and Canada.

RECONSTRUCTION OR STRAITJACKET?

Under the Plan, the Haitian government is to cut the number of its 45,000 civil servants in half, move social services to the private sector, sell its state-owned industries, and remove import restrictions and tariffs. It is the same plan the U.S. has always pursued in the Caribbean—guaranteeing that those lands remain as importers of U.S. goods and pools of cheap labor for their factories.

How sharp a break it is from the demands of the Haitian people and Aristide's economic goals in his first seven months, can be seen in the failure to so much as mention any adjustment of a minimum wage, the rock-bottom wages that make Haitian workers so attractive to U.S. manufacturers. Aristide's government had sought to raise it to the equivalent of \$3 a day (now worth about \$1), but the coup took place before it could be put into effect. This is what the World Bank called a "non-issue" in its plan for Haiti.

Aristide's selection of the wealthy businessman and champion of "free trade," Smarck Michel, to become Prime Minister, was clearly a bow to U.S. rejection of his expected choice, Claudette Werleigh, on the grounds that she was too far to the Left. It is being heralded as an attempt to "bring rich and poor together" in a "transition to democracy." But the irreconcilable class conflicts in Haiti are sure to grow. The very wealthy elite, who sponsored the coup to retain their power, will now only grow wealthier, and the poor will as always grow poorer.

TWO WORLDS IN OPPOSITION

Accepting the limits of today's capitalist world realities is not the freedom the Haitian masses created the Lavalas—their "Flood"—to win. The opposition to U.S. intervention that was heard within Haiti from the beginning stood opposed both to the totally racist opposition that spewed from the U.S. Right and the illusions of some in the Left who saw it as an "opening" for Haiti's liberation. Although many such illusions nonetheless still persist, both within and without Haiti, it does not mean that the masses cannot yet determine their own destiny.*

The very different direction the masses want to take has been seen continuously over the past month—in their fury at the immediate release of the attaches the people have captured and turned over to the U.S. forces; their anger at the troops' protection, not of the people from the thugs still allowed to flourish, but of the homes of the wealthy; their very different concept of what the U.S. calls "looting" and the masses consider reclaiming the wealth they produced.

The conflict between what the masses are aiming for and the "plan" the U.S. has in mind for them—namely, to keep them in check, now that Cedras and company have outlived their usefulness to U.S. imperialism—explains the great difficulty the U.S. forces are having in establishing a new police force. The head of the U.S. Special Forces, who had hoped to simply "purge" and "retrain" the existing force, was reduced to

complaining, "How clean do their hands have to be?" when angry crowds recognized the same thugs who had been oppressing them.

Nothing more dramatically demonstrates the way in which the masses wanted to smash the old, not take it over, than the pictures of the Haitian people sweeping into the emptied police stations and, though they owned nothing, smashing everything in sight—tables, chairs, typewriters—anything that represented the oppression they had been suffering.

What confronts the Haitian people, at the turning point the whole world has reached today when retrogression has threatened every new revolt that gives the world hope, is how to achieve both the uprooting of the old and the creation of the new. In the face of what would seem today the overwhelming weight of U.S. imperialism and the pull of the world market, what looms most crucial of all is never losing the pull of the underlying philosophy of the masses which Marx had called "human power which is its own end." It is that struggle in Haiti that calls for the strong and creative support of all revolutionaries—most of all right at home in the U.S., beginning with a demand for the withdrawal of the U.S. forces and the return to the Haitian masses of their own destiny.

* See "Who will listen to the Haitian masses?" in October 1994 N&L.

Left fails Bosnia test

Chicago—The insensitivity of the majority of the Left to the Bosnian struggle against genocide was manifested yet again at the Radical Scholars and Activists Conference this year when conference organizers included a supporter of the Serbian government in a panel on "Bosnia, the U.S. and the Left." This decision was vociferously opposed by other panel members.

Frieda Afary, a Bosnia solidarity activist, stressed that the Bosnian struggle started as a fight against ethnic cleansing and for preserving a multiethnic society. She argued that it is time we faced the ramifications of reducing solidarity with Bosnia to a question of being for or against U.S. military intervention. Neither those who have advocated U.S. military intervention nor those who cry, "Hands off Yugoslavia!" have raised the question of freedom and self-determination for the Bosnian people. It is time the Left filled the void in the articulation of a liberatory alternative to capitalism. The current trend toward Muslim exclusivism in the Bosnian government has grown in the face of this void.

Susan Soric, a Croatian-American feminist activist who helped found NONA, a center for Bosnian and Croatian women refugees in Zagreb, spoke of the failure of the majority of feminists to recognize the genocidal nature of the rapes perpetrated by the Serbian government in Bosnia: "Do we see Bosnia as an isolated case? We cannot retreat on this issue or else we'll be subjected to tyrants ourselves. Never again is now." She read a condemnation of the Serbian government's atrocities in Bosnia by the Serbian organization, "Women in Black."

Barry Romo, the president of Vietnam Veterans Against the War, drew a parallel between falsifying Serbian genocide and the L.A. Police Department justifying beating Rodney King. He said: "It is kind of bizarre to be at a socialist gathering and debate the truth of what is reality."

Peter Maher, a supporter of the Serbian government and professor of linguistics, presented a chain of propaganda which denied the Serbian government's campaign of ethnic cleansing and rape. The audience expressed their anger and disgust with his lies. A Croatian history professor denounced the inclusion of a Serbian government apologist on the panel and said: "It is your job to separate your socialism from the socialists of the type of Milosevic and Mihailo Markovic."

After the discussion, we had the privilege of seeing the first showing of the film "Ecce Homo" (Behold the Man) made by the Sarajevo woman film maker, Vesna Ljubic. The audience was so moved that the chair of the panel, Rado Mijanovic, had to cancel his planned showing of a Serbian propaganda film.

So topsy-turvy has today's world become that at a gathering of "radical scholars" we had to be subjected to neo-fascistic propaganda under the name of "democracy." Fortunately the other members of the panel and the audience did not allow this atrocity to go unchallenged.

—Sheila Fuller

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THE PRICE OF THE NEW WORLD DISORDER FROM HAITI TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Though considerable numbers of people protested intervention preceding the U.S. invasion of Haiti, here in Los Angeles a demonstration scheduled for the day of the invasion attracted just a handful of protesters. It is troubling how the imagination of American democracy with its image of benign intervention has possessed the progressive Left, whether in the defense of U.S. troops' "peaceful role" or in the opposition to intervention on no principled ground that separates it from the racist Right.

The media image of "peaceful" U.S. troops and "violent" Haitian masses is not "outside" democratic practice but captures the mental straitjackets of abstract democracy. With Aristide's compromised return, we need to move beyond the imagination and image, the "peaceful" invasion of our minds, to begin to comprehend not only the reality of the skeptical attitude of American and Haitian law and order but to grasp on principled revolutionary ground the self-determination of the Idea of freedom. Again, the necessary beginning is this: "Who will listen to the Haitian masses?"

Joseph S.
Los Angeles

I interpret your October lead to say that the legitimacy of the U.S.-installed Aristide presidency is a question for the Haitians masses to settle. On the mark! Many politicians in New York had written off Aristide even before the coup. Perhaps they so value the opportunities of state power they hate to see it exercised with less than maximum effect. But might not the situation hinge on other kinds of (less formal) authority?

Cal Brown
New York

I have been involved in activities opposed to U.S. military intervention for over a decade, but I can't help but feel different about the situation in Haiti. I know the U.S. military has all sorts of plans to make sure things there go their way, but the situation had reached the point where the Haitian people could not remove the military regime without outside intervention.

Feminist
Chicago

The popularity the U.S. has in Haiti right now has to do with the fact that they have killed some thugs which the Haitian masses haven't been able to do for some time. But what will happen now that Aristide has returned and will be constrained and try to break those chains? That's when there will be a whole new dialectic of events that will reveal what the U.S. role really is.

Anti-imperialist
Illinois

For those who wish to get to the bottom of what lies in store for Haiti, I suggest you look at the situation in the Middle East, especially in Iraq. Following the Gulf War in 1991 the U.S. military established a "safe haven" for Iraqi Kurds in northern Iraq—after having ignored the Kurds for years. It appeared to many Kurds that the U.S. was finally doing something of "humanitarian" value with its military power. But three years later the situation in these U.S.-protected "safe-havens" is characterized by murderous infighting between different Kurdish groups, serious economic collapse, and brutal repression against dissident Kurds. Looking at where Haiti is headed tomorrow in light of where Kurdistan is today may tell us something that the mainstream media isn't discussing.

Archivist
Chicago

It is very tragic how the plight of the Kurds and the Shiite marsh Arabs was hardly mentioned during the latest commotion between Clinton and Saddam Hussein. The U.S. can very quickly mobilize tens of thousands of troops to defend the Kuwait emirate, but has little or nothing to say about the victims of Hussein's rule inside Iraq. The same is true of the attitude toward the Palestinians—while everyone trumpets the arrival of "peace" between Israel and Jordan and the effort to achieve a breakthrough in relations between Israel and Syria, the stateless Palestinians are becoming more invisible than ever before.

No wonder Hamas is able to gain so much attention inside the occupied territories with its "anti-American" rhetoric.

Middle Eastern activist
Illinois

The cowardly bomb attack on a public bus in Tel Aviv on Oct. 19, like the one in Buenos Aires this past July 18 that killed more than 100 people, shows again the real face of fundamentalist/racist organizations like Hamas. When terrorism, i.e., the indiscriminate violence against innocent people, is used to achieve an end, it means that those who use it are in a desperate situation. It is clear that Hamas does not have massive support because everything that it represents is inhuman, totally alienated. Why do they kill workers?

I wonder if the "critical" support of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) to Hamas is so critical that it can respond to this question?

Carlos Varela
New York

I was so pleased to get the latest issue of the paper today. It was a shining moment of rationality in a day of dark sorrow. A powerful bomb exploded on a bus during rush hour in Tel Aviv this morning instantly killing 20 people and wounding more than twice that number. I don't know how to convey the magnitude of the destruction.

And yet, despite the brutal logic of a spiraling cycle of violence and revenge, there are fragile signs of hope to be found. Those who once were sworn and bitter enemies work cautiously together, and it may be that one day life in Israel will take on a semblance of sanity. For the present, however, I think it is difficult for those who live here as well as for those who don't to put this society in rational perspective in any but the most tentative of ways. When Jews and Arabs living in Israel finally begin to consider the idea of freedom seriously, I believe they will do it together. I know they have to, and I know they can.

Ted V.
Jerusalem



FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE SIGHTLESS

About 100 blind people and supporters marched and rallied Oct. 12 in front of the State Capitol for "The Right to Read." We support the Blind Childrens' Literacy Act (HB No. 4497) which would maintain choice in educational services, including the Michigan Schools for the Blind and the Deaf (MSB and MSD).

We distributed information packets to the legislators which explain why we need to continue the transcription of Braille textbooks, better preparation of special-ed teachers, and training blind students for independent (cane) travel, typing, and Braille. We also want a separate Board of Education for the MSB, with a majority of blind people.

A lot of people believe technology (such as tape recorders and print-to-sound transcription machines) will allow blind people to be independent. But as Raya Dunayevskaya wrote about Automation, now you are dependent on expensive, bulky machinery (and don't forget a power source!). We need all choices so each child's Individualized Instruction Plan can be realized. "Reading Means Jobs, Self-Esteem and Financial Independence!"

SVG and DP
Detroit

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS?

I call the news media nothing but a propaganda machine for the capitalist system. Take how the O.J. Simpson trial makes the news every day, and compare that to the realities of the California state budget cuts to children's programs, or the lawful allowing of the virtual destruction of all of the state's original for-

Readers' Views

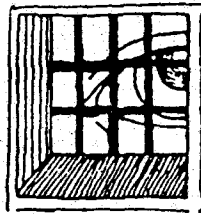
ests. And did you know that we had about 19,000 prisoners incarcerated when Governor Ronald Reagan took office in California, and today we have 126,000? And we the taxpayers are paying \$31,000 a year for each person kept locked up. Meanwhile, two million California children have no medical coverage, and one-quarter of the state's children are living at poverty level or below.

And all I have said above pales in importance, compared to what O.J. Simpson had for breakfast this morning.

Disgusted
Los Angeles

I was a battered wife and nobody ever did a story about my abuse. I'm sure we all know someone who has been abused. But it doesn't get TV coverage. And does the coverage of Haiti, Rwanda, Bosnia, or Iraq compare to the coverage of O.J. Simpson? Whole peoples are losing their very existence. Are we letting the very essence of human beings be destroyed?

Working woman
Oklahoma



VOICES FROM WITHIN PRISON

I'm on this welfare line because I just got out of jail. I'm trying to get my life back together.

Prison equals slave labor. At the New Jersey prison I was in, we made everything we used: clothes, mattresses, farm products, plus diplomatic license plates. The pay started at 22¢ an hour and went up to 52¢! They say it costs \$30,000 a year to keep a person in jail, but they sure didn't spend that on me. At one prison recently, the administrators stole five million dollars.

Man on welfare line
New York City

I am a 39-year-old political prisoner doing 16 years on fabricated charges. I am often in the federal courts on civil issues and prison conditions and find the information in your newspaper very necessary and relatively parallel to my endeavors. It's as if the root of all injustices and social problems, regardless of the realm, lies in the love of money for itself. I always thought we should only like things, but love people. Thank you for your work.

Prisoner



THE PRIDE OF BEING A WOMAN

As a woman you have a certain pride and have to continue the long, rocky path of struggle for who you are. A "woman" can be just a fact or can mean something more. Let me tell you what it is to be a woman. As I look at my reflection to see who I am, I must ignore the dog whistles and the hatred directed toward me because of my gender. Everyday I must walk into a world that is dominated and controlled unfairly by the opposite sex, a world where I am considered less. Yet I know this is wrong. I refuse to let the hatred of those eyes strip and rape my soul. As a woman I refuse to walk behind the man.

Cheryl, high school student
New York

Anna Maillon's column (N&L August-September) "Who defines battered women's struggles?" is enlightening. I was particularly impressed with Marx's "how pivotal is the Man/Woman relationship and not only the class struggle." Although our patriarchal and capitalist system (some men as owners and some women as property) is the root which needs uprooting—our daily work en route to a "new Society" is crucial. Our services protect some women and

children from further domestic violence, undermines the patriarchal structure's permission to batter, and "empowers" women to rebel against male domination and abuse.

Worker for Domestic
Violence Victims
California

To the "Reader" who submitted the piece on feminist theory in the last issue: I think you are right to be wary of generalizations about postmodernists etc., and specifically about the point that discourse theory eliminates agency. Of course, discourse theory doesn't eliminate agency and in a convoluted way makes itself (i.e., discourse) the agent. Literary will, then, is not the author's will, but discourse itself. But in its own terms "it" rereads the past. Spivak's theoretical perspective of "privileging" Marxism is still within the confines of viewing it as a discourse and as such a redundant form of idealism which makes for a very dehumanized conception of Marxism.

Shelley
New York

MARX'S HUMANISM TODAY

Marx's 1844 manuscripts are still new for today, a concrete-Universal. They can't be underestimated. In 1844, Marx anticipated what he would later develop as the perversion of capitalism, how abstract value is a social relation and use value is an individual act. The contemporary Left doesn't grasp Marx's concept of the self-activity of the masses as what can transcend capitalism's fetishism of commodities; they end by making a fetishism of the critique of fetishism. What Hegel wrote about the power of the Idea of Freedom—"When individuals and nations have once got in their heads the abstract concept of full-blown liberty, there is nothing like it in its uncontrollable strength"—Marx concretized in his philosophy of revolution.

Steve
Los Angeles

In the excerpts from Dunayevskaya's draft chapter for *Philosophy and Revolution* on Marx's 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," she says Marx's "promise that 'further down we will develop the logical content of absolute negativity' was not fulfilled." It is Dunayevskaya's Marxist-Humanism that developed this category as its unique contribution, "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning." What Marx did do was "show this absolute negativity at work in the very opposition both to Hegel and the actual capitalistic world...to create 'positive Humanism, beginning from itself.'"

Sonia Bergonzi
Chicago

I enjoyed struggling with the writing by Dunayevskaya on Marx's 1844 Manuscripts. It's important to see that the Hungarian Revolution dragged those essays out of the dust-bin of history, but the point today is what they can mean for the 1990s. The proof that Hegel lives on in Marxism is the "process of becoming" of a whole new continent of thought.

Mitch Weerth
Oakland, Cal.

I'm not sure that Marx's 1844 Manuscripts are directly relevant to today. He says the communist abolition of private property is only a first negation which must in turn be negated in order to reach freedom, but he still calls communism "a necessary mediation." Some stagifying seems implied: first comes the abolition of private property, and only afterward comes "positive humanism." But given the failure of nationalized property to offer any real solutions in the "socialist" countries, can such a "mediation" really still be considered "necessary?"

Graduate student
Chicago

U.S. LABOR IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

To maximize their profits, the giant international monopolies are moving the jobs providing a living wage in North America and Western Europe to the "low wage" Third World, where they can pay workers 60¢ an hour. Even using child and prisoner labor is not abhorrent to them. At home the remaining jobs are taken over by computers which have no unions while millions become unemployed or live on welfare. It's a situation that leads sooner or later to social unrest. The return to power of the different communist parties in Poland, Lithuania and Hungary, the rise of neofascism in Italy and in Western Europe are warning signs. Is a fascist dictatorship in the U.S. or a return of Communist dictatorship in Russia possible? Actually, it seems to be the only logical outcome if the present trends continue. Already \$30 billion have been allocated in the U.S. for fighting "crime" and it's a small step to move from "law and order" to straight dictatorship.

Laszlo Gati
British Columbia

My sister worked at a company that made photo albums in Brownsville, Tenn., not far from Memphis. The company folded up—and then it went to Mexico. She had been there for 25 years. The guy who owned it ran it into the ground, taking everything he could for himself as long as it was running. Some company in California bought what was left and moved it. There was no severance, no pay, no job for my sister. This was after NAFTA passed.

L.P.
Decatur, Ill.

GM here was hiring temporary workers at \$12.75 an hour. There has now been a freeze. None can transfer out and no new hires will come in. This is not just in Oklahoma but on the international level. There will be a lot more to this story in the days ahead, you can be sure.

Lynn
Oklahoma

The social conditions in Britain today have been shaped by global structural

changes in capitalism and 14 years of Conservative rule. Mass unemployment and widespread homelessness are considered normal. Workers' rights continue to be eroded. This year the government abolished Wages Councils (which set minimum wages) and now they want to abolish the Agricultural Wages Board (which sets a minimum payment for farm workers). But the absence of a real challenge from the left is as true in Britain as in any country.

Richard Bunting
Oxford

Dozens of Black construction workers picketed here in October, protesting the lack of Blacks being hired to rebuild the Cypress Freeway which was destroyed by an earthquake in 1989. Caltrans has already hired most of its workers, 98.8% of whom are white. Pickets reported attempts to get applications from the Oakland Caltrans office, only to be told that the positions were filled. White construction workers were later given applications.

Lynn
Oakland, Cal.

National Metal Processing in Detroit signed a contract with Allied Industrial Workers Local 267 in 1974. However, in 1988, the owners began to hire a series of "employee-leasing firms" to manage its employees. In March 1991 the latest of these, Branch International Services, ended negotiations for a new contract, locked out the workers and hired non-union "replacements."

Despite NLRB and Circuit Court rulings in favor of the workers, they haven't been reinstated or received back pay. Many have been unable to find other work. Contact: Locked-out National Metal Workers, P.O. Box 11128, Detroit, MI 48211; phone/fax: 313/584-6556.

Supporter
Detroit

When "global competition" is repeatedly used to force down our standard of living, it was refreshing to read Dunayevskaya's poignant reminder that it is not competition that yields labor-

saving devices, but rather the capitalists' need to get rid of rebellious labor. Perhaps nowhere has labor been more rebellious lately than among postal workers, who have developed an odd habit of helping their bosses "retire." While the Post Office has eliminated no fewer than 45,000 jobs, they've yet to eliminate the rebellion. A recent study by the Government Accounting Office reveals that automation of mail processing in Waterloo and Mason City, Iowa has resulted in a huge decrease in labor productivity. The Post Office is at a loss to explain how this could have happened.

Jan Kollwitz
Chicago

VOICES OF THE LATINO DIMENSION



Recently, while distributing News & Letters and the Spanish supplement, Noticias y Cartas, outside a building containing garment shops, we found several workers sitting on the floor of the lobby. We spoke with two young women from Mexico, who explained that the owner was a half-hour late and would probably not arrive that day. The owner is the only one with keys to their small shop, and if she doesn't show up, all the workers have made the trip to work for nothing. Needless to say, they make minimum wage and don't get paid for days they don't work.

N&L member
New York

Economic desperation today is generating a desire for a way out. I sense that workers are trying to find an explanation of where we are. Culture can unify people, but it can also express limits, as in what I sometimes see in Mexican nationalism. All nationalities are present here in the U.S., and there is the possibility here to break from bondage and work for change, across boundaries.

From what I've read of Marxist-Humanism, this philosophy is raising questions to find a way out. We need to be active in the development of freedom ideas.

Mexican revolutionary
Los Angeles

THE REAL CRIMINALS

I am the mother of four young adults. Recently, after coming home at night, my sons have told me how they have been stopped and frisked by undercover police in our own neighborhood. This has happened to them more than once. There is no apparent reason for this other than the way my sons dress and carry themselves. They do not belong to any gang, and were never arrested. The police call them liars and generally attempt to intimidate them.

My family lives in Wrigleyville. This area has attracted many young professionals. There is construction going on all over, condominiums can't be built fast enough. It seems as though in order to make the streets "safe" for these young white professionals, the police have taken to harassing young men who do not fit into that mold. As a mother this is very frightening. I am not about to ask my sons to begin wearing the uniform of conformity. I like them fine just as they are. But once they walk out that door, they are vulnerable. Any cop who doesn't like their walk, or the way they dress can stop them. Hopefully, my sons will not forget who they are dealing with and will not react normally to this outrage.

Judy
Chicago

QUEBEC'S GAY DIMENSION

You should know that the New Democratic Party in Quebec didn't get around to passing a resolution defending human rights for gay and lesbian people, even though they support it in their rhetoric. On the other hand, the Parti Quebecois did. Do you think that has something to do with their winning the recent election?

Gay man
Chicago

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Black/Red View

Berkeley High 'School Colors'

by John Alan

This October PBS (Public Broadcasting System) presented "Frontline," its highly respected public affairs program, "School Colors," a documentary film report on why racial integration has failed to become a meaningful success at Berkeley High in California after almost 30 years of practice.

"School Colors," while not a great documentary, is not the usual kind of television documentary on the crisis in the public school system because the story is told from the point of view of students and teachers and not of school administrators or sociologists. Thus, what we hear are the voices of minority students telling us what's wrong with racial integration, why it doesn't work and why it is often a humiliating or confrontational experience in a high school noted for its racial and ethnic diversity.

CLASS REALITY BEHIND DIVERSITY

A Black woman student described the world of Berkeley High by pointing to the steps of the main building and saying that's where the white students gather, "That's Europe and I never go there." And on the other side where the Hispanic students gather, "That's Mexico, and where I stand is little Africa."

A Black male student said: "Integration is the worst thing that could have happened to the Black male."

A Hispanic student said it's an insult to be called an American when Hispanics, after a debate, could not get their own edited page in the school's paper.

Residents of Berkeley have long known that there was little racial harmony at Berkeley High. Stories appeared in local newspapers about verbal clashes between white and minority students. Therefore, "School Colors" offers no startling revelations. But when scenes of racial tensions appear in a documentary film, and the voices and faces of the students are heard and seen, a powerful new dimension is added to the portrayal of racial tension at Berkeley High. Some parents considered "School Colors" too negative, others said integration has failed.

Racial and ethnic tensions at Berkeley High can be understood more clearly when one catches the crisis in the dialectic of self-identity created by the racially diverse nature of the student body: it is 38% white, 35% Black, 11% Asian and Pacific Islander, 9% Hispanic and 7% mixed race. This statistical diversity is simply bare variety, and there is no meaningful interrelationship or equality of racial and ethnic status on the campus.

CONTRADICTIONS IN BLACK IDENTITY

What Blacks and other minority students are aware of is that they're from a lower social and economic class and that the 38% white middle-class students compose 80% of the top track, college bound students. "School Colors" deals with this class difference obliquely by juxtaposing a scene of white students studying English classics and calculus with a scene of a Black student finding it difficult to identify the shape of a cube. And then there is a scene where a math teacher says that placing students in a track is undemocratic because it denies many

students whole areas of academic training.

In another scene a Black teacher is telling a class of mostly Black students that they need to speak English grammatically or they will not be able to get a job, buy a car or raise a family. She mimics ungrammatical Black English, and then is opposed by a Black student who insists that English is not his problem and that Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X didn't concern themselves with English grammar. He sounds absurd—just as absurd as those Black students who create Africa out of their sheer imagination as they self-segregate themselves on campus. But it's an "absurdity" which is not at all divorced from reality or reasoning. It should be listened to!

Both the interjection of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X in the English grammar class and the creation of Africa on Berkeley High's campus are attempts to project a Black identity into a perception of a multicultural campus which, in reality, promotes a concept of white middle-class cultural ambitions—a reality from which most of the minority students are excluded by class, race and history. And history is a very important defining element in this relationship; the past is present in one's self-identity and African Americans carry a great burden of past history into the present.

The projection of Black self-identity certainly is not on the same level as "Black Is Beautiful" was in the 1960s. Although it creates tension, it remains only a symbolic gesture towards overcoming the contradiction between the idea of education and the reality of the elitist kind of education doled out at Berkeley High. However, the projection of Black self-identity has caused the press, documentary film producers and television critics to arrive at the conclusion that the meaning of multiculturalism is on trial. In this case "multiculturalism" is not in the dock, but the entire de facto segregated U.S. public school system is, which in many areas has become an ideological battle ground for those who seek to control the minds of a future generation.

Hell No! to Prop. 187

Los Angeles—On Nov. 8 Californians will be voting on Proposition 187 which would exclude undocumented immigrants and their children born in the U.S. from basic educational, medical and social services. It would require professionals in those fields to report all individuals suspected of being undocumented. Up to 100 thousand people marched through Los Angeles Oct. 16 to protest this Nazi-like measure.

Starting in East Los Angeles, we walked down the newly named Cesar Chavez Avenue. Teachers, nurses, doctors, social workers, priests and others joined the masses of people of all ages and races. The great majority were from Mexico and Central America. Many marchers of African ancestry were there, as were whites and Asians. The youthful Korean Drum Corps played their instruments and danced the entire length of the march on that hot day. Aztec dancers performed.

I marched near Justice for Janitors for a long time and talked with them about their march in June (see July News & Letters). I was also near the Bus Riders Union, recently active in keeping fares from being raised.

I recognized a Chicano actor and a number of Mexican and Chicano artists. One said that as "free" as we may feel in the U.S., he feels like the police run the streets, whereas in Mexico the people still own the street.

On this day all of us seemed to share the connection of our indignation and our hope to change this life into something livable. I would catch someone's eye and a smile of delight would cross our faces: The street was ours—for a moment. At one point a police car beeped its siren at us to indicate that we had to make way for oncoming traffic. Instead of moving away, a mass of siren beeps poured forth from the crowd.

The chants in Spanish about "Pig" Wilson (Pete Wilson is the California governor pushing the proposition) were funny, but most of the slogans I heard were dull and could not compare to the sensation I felt in general. How can such a powerful connection between people, as was this march, begin to take us further than "vote yes," or "vote no"? —Anna Maillon

San Francisco—Almost a thousand people marched through San Francisco's Mission District on Oct. 15, calling for an end to racism against immigrants and carrying banners that read "No human being is illegal" and "Deport Columbus." Among the crowds were groups of students from Mission High School, where action against Prop. 187 (anti-immigrants) and Prop. 184 (three strikes) has taken the form of sit-ins, numerous walkouts and weekly demonstrations.

The demonstration lasted from 10 a.m. to late at night and during the march it sometimes spanned 12 city blocks. Most of the crowd was under 15, with huge contingents of youth from both the Mission, a Latino neighborhood, and students from the Bayview-Hunters Point housing projects. —Participant

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In Lexington, Ky., riot police patrol in force after a city cop shot a Black youth and Blacks took to the streets by the hundreds in protest.

Rights hearing on U.S. racism

New York—Hearings on U.S. racism were held in Harlem Oct. 8 before a panel of distinguished human rights authorities from around the world. Sponsored by the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches, the hearings are being held in seven cities around the U.S. If the panel finds U.S. racism to violate human rights, it will recommend the United Nations take action.

Local people testified about the many police killings of Black youth and adults, including the recent murder of a 13-year-old boy who, with his friends, was playing with toy guns when a cop happened upon them, saw the toy in his hand and fired.

Eddie Ellis, a former Black Panther, described his frame-up by the government in 1969 as part of its "counter-intelligence" program against political activists. He was recently released after 23 years in prison. Another framed activist has been able to prove his innocence by obtaining his government files, Ellis said, but his files have not been released because the feds claim their 1969 investigation is still ongoing!

Panelist Donald Woods, the South African journalist who was banned for 14 years and had three friends killed in prison, said he had been skeptical about charges of political prisoners in the U.S., but now he understands that the U.S. doesn't call them political prisoners, but instead criminalizes political people.

Adam Stevens described the extensive research and experiments being sponsored by the federal government to identify potential criminals when they are small children. Called "youth violence initiative" research, it is based on the theory that an early tendency to violence is genetic and can be ascertained by age six. Research is going on at over 300 institutions, and thousands of public school children are being watched. Bio-psychological techniques of social control, i.e., drugs and psychotherapy, are offered free to parents of targeted children.

In spite of protests by parent, student and public health groups, two Harlem school districts are participating in one such project, and Harvard University's project involves 10,000 children in Chicago. Needless to say, the children selected are mostly Black and Latino.

The "youth violence initiative," for example, fits right in with the recent revival of eugenics theories in respectable places. They could not get away with such discredited malarky were it not for the fact that capitalism has no use for much of the youth population. Instead of admitting that crime is caused by lack of jobs and job prospects, the government is devising excuses to drug Black children and to lock up Black youth and throw away the key.

Racism is not a static phenomenon, but is in part a response to the rebelliousness of the Black population. The Los Angeles uprising scared the rulers, and they must find ways to control the youth who want to tear up this society at its roots. —News and Letters participants

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Rebuilding Haiti

Oakland, Cal.—A member of the Bay Area Haitian American Council went back to Haiti for Aristide's triumphant return. These are some of his comments:

I was on one of the planes which accompanied President Aristide's plane to Haiti. Even before we landed, from the view above the city, we saw the streets full of people. When we landed we could see many, many people showing their portraits of Aristide. You could see that some of the pictures had many folds in them from three years of being in hiding.

As I witnessed this, Cesar Chavez' slogan, "Si, se Puede," kept coming to me. The people's determination and resistance rooted in their faith for a liberated Haiti had brought the struggle to this joyful day.

Nobody likes to see a foreign power at their homes, but people feel that because of the U.S. soldiers many of them are still alive. Images of the Haitian police beating a man and shooting people right in front of the press and U.S. soldiers created an outrage in Haiti and a furor of calls to the White House from people in the U.S.

The people are not waiting for the military to do anything for them. They are disarming the police, etc. They are very busy people: busy rebuilding the movement, busy rebuilding the country. I saw a very militant spirit there. People are aware of the sacrifices they made; they have been starving for three years, suffering tortures and murders. They know who the enemy is. They know that the changes are their doing.

The death squads are the enemy. They know that the CIA has a relationship with the death squads like FRAHP and the Haitian military. FRAHP was created as a terrorist organization. We need full investigations of the drug trade going through Haiti and the corruption of the elite. The people fleeing Haiti were fleeing calculated, cold terrorism.

The mass organizations such as Ti Legliz (Little Church), the student organizations, the peasants and the industrial unions will continue in their work to democratize Haiti. For example, union workers fired from the state-owned power company, Electricite d'Haiti, went back to demand their jobs.

The coup was an attempt to dam the human flood (Lavalas) for justice and democracy. There is a crack in the dam and Lavalas is pouring out. That's why we need solidarity. The traditional bosses and their death squads still have their weapons. Aristide is only as strong as the movement.

Militant labor actions resist Clinton's state-capitalist agenda

(Continued from page 1)

tioned. Caterpillar workers walked out of plants well in advance of the official strike deadline this summer. Some 2,000 striking tire builders and other unionists fought with police protecting scabs as they entered Dunlop Tire Company in Huntsville, Ala., Aug. 21. And workers in the General Motors Livonia, Mich., engine plant recently sabotaged the electrical lines as redress to grueling conditions.

WHAT RECOVERY?

The rise in labor militancy in 1994 comes amidst a so-called economic recovery that has hardly reached poor people and workers in the U.S. Yet the billboard issue for politicians big and small—and incapable of making a fundamental difference in the lives of common people—is “crime.” Detached from any social context, the rhetoric oozes racist code language that has lamentably caught the ear of many white workers. All too many have also gravitated to anti-immigrant politics like those surrounding California Proposition 187 as if that is an answer to their problems. Furthermore, union members in Virginia have formed “Coal Miners for Ollie North” to back the Senate bid of the once Reagan minion and Contragate felon. And racist-tinged union signs outside the Firestone-Bridgestone gates in Decatur pin the loss of jobs in America on Japan. These are evidence of the kind of confusion that can kill any new beginnings for labor on the horizon and shows the need for a vision for labor all its own.

For the current militancy occurs in the context of some dismal economic facts. A quarter of the new jobs created in the first half of last year's economy were temporary help. A quarter were part-time jobs. U.S. census figures from 1992 indicate the number of full-time workers in poverty increased more than 50% since 1979. Simply put, a third of America's workers are employed at poverty wages. Trends also show U.S. working families gravitating toward the lower income pole as middle incomes disappear.

Capitalism has continued its increasingly hostile atmosphere for labor organization into the 1990s as well. Abetted by the National Labor Relations Board's snail's pace for redressing unfair labor practices, employers fired 10,000 workers per year in the 1980s for trying to organize. And “good faith” bargaining for first contracts cloaked stalling tactics until pro-union votes could be set aside. Where workplaces are organized, major strikes had declined drastically in the 1980s.

Closely linked to union membership hitting an all-time low is the current rise in productivity. The result is harder, faster, and longer work with fewer workers because of layoffs. The number of auto workers in the U.S. has fallen from nearly one million in 1985 to 750,000 today. The previous decade saw cuts just as drastic. The auto industry is not alone. Steel employment has fallen from 772,000 to 421,000 over the past decade. And in retailing, bar codes have contributed to the loss of 450,000 jobs since 1990.

STATE-CAPITALISM'S NEXT INCARNATION

While the downsizing continues, the quest for higher productivity growth, the Holy Grail of capitalists, continues. After the 1974-75 global economic crisis and restructuring, it plummeted. Then Reaganomics came along in the 1980s to discipline labor by repressing unions and amassing a national debt so great that it would severely curb government-funded social services for working and poor families. Productivity growth has recently risen slowly, very slowly, yet capitalism is still waiting for the booming profits from heavy investment in computerized processes during the 1980s.

“Political crises reflect the general absolute law of capitalist production differently in different historic periods” is how Raya Dunayevskaya described capitalism's restructuring to survive a falling rate of profit. It was the Great Depression's birthing of U.S. state-capitalism under the rubric of “New Deal” that engendered a three-way alliance of labor leaders, government and business. It was tied to Keynesian economics which held

that full employment was the key to economic recovery and to eluding social revolution.

In the 1980s, Reaganomics, as articulated by economist Peter F. Drucker, proposed that economic growth could be uncoupled from employment. Indeed, while productivity has begun to rise, administration economists keep revising what passes for full employment. At the same time wage levels, adjusted for inflation, are actually falling. For workers, the economic crisis never abated.

Given the push for greater productivity (read “sweated labor”) and the impoverishment of workers, how did the union bureaucracy meet this onslaught? Concessions bargaining became the reasonable solution, so convinced were the labor bureaucrats that labor's future is tied to that of capitalist production. Now company lawyers present union bargainers with contracts that make it seem like the unions don't exist.

CLINTON'S NEW AGE LABOR DISCIPLINE

Workers taking up positions on the picket lines at Caterpillar seemed almost a backdrop to a well-publicized fight in Congress that would soon culminate in passage or defeat of the Striker Replacement Bill, long a singular goal of the AFL-CIO and the UAW especially in answer to persistent anti-union Reaganism. Since a filibuster killed the bill once and for all, the Caterpillar strike has receded from view. What almost went unnoticed at the time the bill failed, as the strike continued, was a letter from President Bill Clinton to Caterpillar management. In it he asked management to bargain with the union, adding that its intransigence signaled an undesirable willingness to replace workers. He had a better idea: management-labor cooperation.

Far from just a meek favor for labor, the letter signaled a fundamental effort by the administration to shore up capitalism in crisis, for during 1994 the Labor Department headed by Harvard economist Robert Reich has held hearings around the nation on proposed changes in labor law. In doing so, Clinton's “Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations” has undertaken the government's first major examination of workplace conditions and laws since the Depression.

This builds on efforts to co-opt the voice and functions of unions by giving employees the idea that management would listen to them. Employers in the 1980s instituted—often with union backing—an array of organizational schemes, variously called quality circles, labor-management cooperation, employee involvement, jointedness and teams. Alarmed over the sharp decline in the rate of growth of U.S. manufacturing productivity and by increasing global competition, the commission is poised to sharply alter labor law and government regulation. It seeks to enshrine those corporate employee participation schemes. Rules prohibiting company unions would be scrapped.

Two new kinds of organization are vying. One kind is the workplace of the future envisioned by Secretary Reich, emanating from the despotic plan of capital in its high-tech phase. The other is the organization of thought evoked by the very conditions imposed on workers in the 1980s. And from that organization of thought, both voices and alternative organizations are beginning to come forth.

AN ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSE?

“A bunch of crap, that's all it is,” is how a Black woman worker locked out from Staley—which had a cooperation program—greeted the commission's proposals. “The companies want us to give them our mind. What's in it for workers? Are we going to keep our jobs for life? Are

they going to promise not to relocate somewhere else?”

Perhaps the grandest experiment in team organization has been the “revolutionary” Saturn auto factory in Spring Hill, Tenn. General Motors and the union leaders didn't plan on members of UAW Local 1853 voting Sept. 7 to scrap cooperation. Rank-and-file opponents of the pro-cooperation union leaders had organized Members for Democracy.

In Decatur the three assailed unions meet weekly to map out joint actions. In a step away from the top-down business union mold, activities from publishing leaflets to planning actions like those on Oct. 15 take place through local channels. Furthermore, locked-out Staley workers from the beginning have welcomed solidarity from every quarter, further promoting dialogue.

The organization of thought has extended into internationalism, as well. Due to cross-border solidarity between General Electric workers in the U.S. and Mexico, members of the independent STIMAHCS union in Ciudad Juarez across the border from El Paso, Texas, won the right to a secret ballot union representation election this summer. And Honeywell workers who make thermostats and switches in Chihuahua received assistance from unionists in the U.S. when 20 in-plant organizers were dismissed.

In the so-called right-to-work South, winning and keeping a union is a militant struggle all the more so because of the viciousness of the opposition. In the organizing drive at Tultex, the campaign became the talk of Martinsville, Va., this summer virtually drowning out an expensive anti-union campaign run by the company through the media. Members of other unions helped leaflet plant gates and helped in other ways.

Other kinds of organizing, especially among Black workers, are reaching across union lines and even across trades. In North Carolina, Poultry Workers in Action recently challenged a state center established to find ways to reduce repetitive stress disorders. They condemned the enterprise as just another false scheme to set up worker-management cooperation without binding guarantees for employees that a union contract could provide. In Indianola, Miss., a worker at the Delta Pride catfish processing plant which organized a union eight years ago reported that a neighbor at the massive new Fruit of the Loom plant in Greenville sought her help in starting a union shop committee.

Workers' centers are a new kind of organization meant to defeat the notion that the workplace or craft is the only basis of worker organization. A worker center has taken root in Ahsoka, N.C., the Center for Women's Economic Alternatives which assists women in the poultry processing industry. Others have membership that includes Asian and Latina workers in Oakland, New York, El Paso and other cities. (See “Community based workers' centers meet,” N&L Aug.-Sept. 1994, page 2.) Women are prominent in all the centers.

Government intervention on behalf of employers against labor and the crushing drive for greater productivity for competing in an integrated global economy—these cannot be underestimated as forces arrayed against working people and their families. Yet just as dominating is American ideology, the most persistent and disorienting form of which is racism. The challenge to capitalism seen in 1994's new actions, new thinking, and new organizations therefore includes a challenge to labor to distinguish itself as “reason” apart from American racist ideology and other false alternatives to capital's domination. Working out that sort of philosophy is the need of the moment.

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

These “phantoms formed in the brains of men,” as Marx described this phenomenon in *The German Ideology*, are also “sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises” (Collected Works, vol. 5, p. 36). The racist political phantom of “crime” is anxious is a subliminate of America's new material reality. The middle-class anxiety over its shrinking job base, a growing surplus population swollen by lay-offs, immigration and perceptions of record high Black and Latino birth rates, and a dysfunctional education system whose tax base is being shifted to bolster an unprecedented prison construction boom.

The “material premises” upon which this regressive edifice rests are, paradoxically, the very ones the Clinton administration has championed and refined from the Reagan-Bush period, namely, the benefits of “free markets” and “free trade.” What these “material premises” meant for American capitalism is down-sizing, capital flight to cheaper labor markets, unprecedented mass layoffs powered by a high tech “revolution,” a de-skilling of labor and concomitant declining wage rate. The unemployment rate was re-calibrated to correspond to the new economic reality, while the educational chances, and thus economic future, of the next generation became as uncertain as the “new world order.”

The political displacement of middle-class anxiety over these consequences of the “material premises” of “free markets” and “free trade” onto Black folk, and increasingly Latinos, actually conceals an ideological shift in America's vaunted “work ethic.”

What is retrogressively new about the racism of middle-class social anxiety, rooted in the structural dynamics of the current economic reality, is that, added to its



fixation with the 1970s' “feminization of poverty” and 1980s' demonization of young Black males, its current preoccupation with the transgressions of children reflects a new “anticipatory stigmatization” of the poor. This refers to those pseudo-scientific theories, such as found in Herrnstein and Murray's *Bell Curve*, and popular perceptions of the poor that “predict” the failure of Black folk to learn, to work in a high tech economy, and to live in disciplined accord with “American values.”

The American middle-class is in a state of self-induced denial regarding, the structural causes of unemployment and crime. It is one which rests on the “material premise” that it is simply in the class interests of those who benefit from the degradation of the Black labor market and the penal containment of Black surplus labor to boldly go where no society has gone before, that is, to extinguish the future generation only recently, or not yet, born. That's what's frighteningly new this election year.

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Essay Article

by Kevin Anderson

Derrida on Marx: (Re)turn or De(con)struction?

Ever since he stunned an international Marx conference in Riverside, California last year with his call for a return to Marx, something which also marked a major "turn" in his thought, Jacques Derrida's book *The Specters of Marx* has been eagerly awaited by a broad spectrum of the intellectual Left. The book is in fact a much-expanded version of that April 1993 lecture.

Derrida and the philosophico-literary school of "deconstruction" which he represents have long been associated with an intense theoretical radicalism rooted in abstruse linguistic/textual analysis. He and his numerous followers along with the whole cultural movement termed postmodernism have tended to disparage not only liberal thought, but also Marx's thought, as essentially Eurocentric, phallogocentric, and full of humanist illusions and delusions.

Instead of Marx, Nietzsche and Heidegger are often invoked as the truly radical philosophers, something which drew Derrida into an embarrassing (for him) dispute with the American leftist philosopher Thomas Sheehan in the *New York Review of Books* in 1993 over Derrida's attempt to suppress the English translation of his own statements which seemed to excuse Heidegger's anti-Semitism.

At a directly philosophical level, his most prominent colleague in the United States, Gayatri Spivak, while using some of Marx's theory of exploitation has pointed proudly to "deconstruction's share in the undoing of the dialectic" as well as to deconstruction's opposition to all forms of "transcendence" of the given.¹ Derrida himself, in one of his first essays in English, originally published in 1968, attacked humanist readings of Marx as forms of "onto-theo-teleology," calling instead for "an absolute break and difference" from/with the Western humanist tradition, Marx included, via a return to Heidegger and Nietzsche.²

Derrida's own work has usually been more complicated and interesting than that of his followers. For example, while some of his American followers support crude forms of Third Worldism and others hesitate to openly defend women's liberation against Islamic fundamentalism, Derrida himself strongly supports human rights movements. He is a prominent member, for example, of the French committee to support the persecuted anti-fundamentalist Bangladeshi feminist writer, Taslima Nasreen.

ON THE URGENCY OF MARX FOR TODAY

The opening pages of Derrida's new book are full of praise for Marx. In the first chapter, he writes: "Upon rereading the *Manifesto* and several other great works of Marx, I said to myself that I knew of few texts in the philosophical tradition, perhaps none, whose lesson appears more urgent today."³ Derrida mourns the fact that today "the name of Marx has disappeared" (p. 5) from philosophical and political debate, but he says that the specter of Marx still haunts our post-1989 world. There are many provocative literary allusions with regard to

the notion of the specter, not only to the first sentence of the *Communist Manifesto* about the specter of communism haunting Europe, but also to Hamlet being haunted by his murdered father's ghost.

Derrida's point is not to introduce or reintroduce Marx into what he calls the "great canon of Western political philosophy" (p. 32) but rather to make Marx actual, to challenge the new "dominant discourse" which has become an "incantation" to the effect that "Marx is dead, communism is dead, very dead, with its hopes, its discourse, its theories and its practices. It says: long live capitalism, long live the market, here's to the survival of economic and political liberalism" (p. 52). He argues that "it is necessary to assume the heritage of Marxism" in such a way that this "heritage is never a given, it is always a task" to be worked out for the future (p. 54).

These gestures toward Marx for today do not mean, however, a return to the humanism and dialectic of Hegel and Marx. There are enough hints even on these early pages praising Marx of where he will go later. For one still finds silence about the 1844 *Essays*, and an effort to separate the "spirit" of Marxism from "Marxism as ontology, philosophical or metaphysical system, [or] as 'dialectical materialism'" (p. 68).

Then, a little over halfway through the book, Derrida announces that "what is certain is that I am not a Marxist" (p. 88). As he goes on, it becomes clearer that the "spirit" of Marx which he wants to evoke is that of a radical critique of capitalism, but not the "dialectical method," the concept of "totality" or other philosophical aspects of Marxism, which he explicitly opposes (p. 88).

It is beginning to sound more familiar, as if he wishes to use some of Marx's socio-economic analysis without embracing the core of Marxism, the dialectic, that he wishes instead to substitute his own deconstructionism for the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic. Deconstruction, he tells us, is "an attempted radicalization of Marxism" (p. 92). It is necessary to use deconstruction to overcome some of Marxism's worst flaws which include its "anthropo-theology" rooted in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* (p. 144), its "untenable humanism" (p. 145), and its concept of the "whole" (p. 146).

DIVERGING FROM MARX

In the closing pages of the book Derrida takes up the famous section on commodity fetishism from Chapter One of *Capital*. He seems to agree with Marx that under capitalism the products of human labor take on a life of their own, assuming a fetishized, mystical form while, at the same time, the human being is dehumanized, and relations between people, Marx writes, take on "the fantastic form of a relation between things."⁴ All those who are oppressed by this racist, sexist, homophobic, classist system know well this feeling of being reduced to an object, a thing, (some)thing less than human.

But it is at this crucial juncture that Derrida diverges in an important way from Marx. He seems to make a serious misreading of Marx when he writes that "as soon as there is production, there is fetishism" (p. 166). Derrida probably knows full well that for Marx, precapitalist societies with their more open forms of social hierarchy did not need commodity fetishism, and were socially transparent. Also, he no doubt is aware (but does not mention) that Marx saw the growing self-organization of the workers and other revolutionary groups as pointing toward a future society of freely associated labor where human rationality would take hold of and uproot commodity fetishism.

Derrida seems to argue instead for the permanence of fetishism, and mentions the "general question of fetishization" as something he will return to in a "work to come" (p. 167). He apparently considers Marx's critique of commodity fetishism under capitalism to be nothing more than an attempted exorcism of the fetish. Or putting it more accurately, he thinks that dialectical Reason—in the sense of unmasking, critiquing, and going beyond the fetish—itself has no rational basis.

He suggests that Marx may be grounded in a set of "messianic" beliefs, which includes, Derrida writes, an "exorcism at the beginning of *Capital*" which is linked to a great "revolutionary promise" for the future (p. 163). Derrida does not therefore dismiss Marx because even such an "exorcism" would not "discredit" Marx, and he points to the possibility of a form of messianism without theology. However, he writes that Marx is a "critical but predeconstructive" thinker (p. 170). But this does not mean any easy assimilation of Marx into deconstruction for "Marx has not yet been received" and he remains even today "a clandestine immigrant" in Western thought (p. 174).

Let us look more closely at Marx's own text to get a better grasp of Derrida's critique. Derrida (p. 164) quotes the following passage on commodity fetishism: "The whole mystery of commodities, the whole magic and necromancy that surrounds the products of labor on the basis of commodity production, vanishes therefore as soon as we come to other forms of production."⁵

He never, however, quotes any of Marx's historico/dialectical analysis which follows, wherein precapitalist social formations such as European feudal-

ism had "no need for labor and its products to assume a fantastic form different from their reality" (p. 170) because the exploitation of the peasantry was open, brutal, and direct. In a different way, the liberatory society of the future to which Marx also points will dispense with commodity fetishism because in a society based upon "freely associated" labor, human relations would assume not only a "transparent" but also a "rational" form (p. 171). It is these very notions of transparency and of dialectical Reason which Derrida questions.

To be sure, in today's retrogressive climate, it is hard to see the actuality of dialectical Reason as negation of the negation, as the positive in the negative of this crisis-ridden world. Yet without such a perspective, on what grounds can we really go beyond the capitalist order?

On the other hand, Derrida's critique is more compelling than that of Althusser's a generation ago. Althusser tried to banish Hegel, humanism and dialectical Reason from Marx, which was impossible to do given Marx's own writings. Derrida, however, is seriously engaged with Hegel throughout his writings. Although he too is an anti-humanist, he acknowledges Marx's humanism, yet urges us to return to Marx.

Two decades ago, in her *Philosophy and Revolution*, the Marxist-Humanist philosopher Raya Dunayevskaya wrote that in the reified [thingified] and fetishized world of capitalism, "the reification of human relations is a fact so overpowering that it dominates the whole of society and the thought of the period."⁶ Is this not the trap Derrida has fallen into, in assuming fetishism to be permanent? Is this not in large part because deconstruction lacks an historical dimension?

Perhaps this problem is related to another one also found in deconstruction and in postmodern theory generally, the tendency to reject subjectivity. Dunayevskaya addresses this problem in a later discussion of fetishism. There, she stresses that post-Marx Marxists tended to discuss fetishism, if at all, only as an "objective" feature of capitalism, one which weighed down upon us, and not as something which also generated "subjective" yearnings for freedom on the part of the oppressed: "The objective may outweigh the subjective, but, unless we see the unity of the two and grapple with the truth of both, we will never be free. And freedom is what all the striving is about."⁷

But none of this should obscure the uniqueness of what Derrida has done. In raising Marx as the thinker for today, Derrida may have opened up some important space for debate on Marx, Hegel, and the dialectic among youth, feminists, and radical intellectuals generally.

Furthermore, Derrida has put forth very forcefully the notion that Marx's own writings, by now over a century old, are still, as cited earlier, very "urgent" for "today." Perhaps some of this will inspire the generation of radical youth who have been influenced by Derrida to confront Marx directly and to connect Marx to their fight against sexism, racism, ethnocentrism, homophobia, war, and imperialism. It is interesting that Derrida is the only one of today's internationally prominent philosophers to advocate a return to Marx.

He is taking the opposite tack to that of other "radical" philosophers such as Richard Rorty or Jürgen Habermas. Why has he done so? Why now?

Something is rotten in a European civilization which allows genocide to continue unchecked in Bosnia, which greets another genocide of up to a million people by the French-financed Rwandan regime with near silence, and which allows a "normal" fascism, as in the "neo" fascists who are part of the Italian government, to become simply an accepted part of political life. All the while this same civilization, of which America is the sole superpower, closes its borders ever tighter against people of color.

It is perhaps this rot,⁸ this decadence, this retrogression, which has drawn one radical French philosopher, one who as a teenager was forced to wear the yellow star under the Nazi Occupation, to return to the greatest of Europe's revolutionary philosophers, Karl Marx, as the one who is most "urgent" for us today.

5. Marx, *Capital*, p. 169. Further pagination directly in the text.

6. Dunayevskaya, *Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, orig. 1973), p. 88, emphasis added.

7. Dunayevskaya, Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1991), p. 144.

8. In a recent review of the book in France, Alain Guillemin writes: "We can thank Derrida for having written such a book during a period of rotteness," *L'Homme et la Société*, No. 111-12 (January-June, 1994).

"We wish particularly to emphasize our opposition to the view that a labor newspaper should devote its pages exclusively to matters that immediately and directly concern the spontaneous labor movement, and leave the theory of socialism, science, politics, questions of party organization, etc., to an organ for the intelligentsia. On the contrary, it is necessary to combine all the concrete facts and manifestations of the labor movement with these questions; the light of theory must be brought to bear upon every separate fact."

V.I. Lenin

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1. See Spivak, "Limits and Openings of Marx in Derrida," in her *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 119.

2. Derrida, "The Ends of Man," in his *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. by Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 134-35.

3. Derrida, *The Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 13. Further pagination directly in the text, translation occasionally modified.

Why plague in India now?

The world's first pneumonic plague epidemic in decades hit India in September. Thousands were stricken; its resurgence left the government scrambling to deny, then explain it. The plague is one aspect of a resurgence of infectious diseases across the world. It is an inevitable result of the global restructuring of capital brought on by the past 20 years of economic crisis.

It is only natural that an epidemic should come charging out of shantytowns like those in Surat, to which the urban poor and expropriated peasants are consigned.

In Surat garbage and flood debris, even dead animals, had been left rotting for weeks. Survivors jeered and threw stones at officials who made a show of inspecting the city. "The plague is a natural culmination of the breakdown of the system, and of urban civil society," said one resident.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that infectious diseases are on the rise in the U.S. too. How can this happen in the face of continuing technological progress, 20 years after a U.S. Surgeon General proclaimed that it was "time to close the book on infectious disease"?

While the Surgeon General was boasting about the conquest of infectious disease, tuberculosis persisted in the ghettos. A two-tier health care system nurtured deadly new drug-resistant strains. A World Health Organization report declared a global TB emergency, predicting 30 million deaths in 10 years.

Now that its threat to white middle-class America is clear, billions of dollars will be spent just to contain TB. "We have turned a disease that was completely preventable and curable into one that is neither," said the president of the American Lung Association.

Do today's rulers harbor the illusion that they can protect themselves through spatial apartheid, shutting out Blacks, immigrants, and the working class from their gated communities, their fortress office buildings? Or do those barriers only constitute another symptom of the fatal illness infecting this so-called civilization?

—Franklin Draitnyev

4. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, trans. by Ben Fowkes (New York: Vintage, 1976), p. 165.

Eyewitness to China's hollow economic boom

(Continued from page 1)

turned to the domestic market and beat off industries in other parts of the country.

Some officials make a fortune by declaring bankruptcy. By the end of this year legislation on bankruptcy will be put in practice. One woman factory worker told me she feared that would legitimize factory closures and more workers would lose their jobs.

It is likely that China will complete privatization in about 20 years. I was told that many factories have already closed and a large number of workers are let go with 50-70 yuan a month. That's far from enough to buy food today. Exploitation exists broadly. A friend who works in a school told of how peasants laboring on a construction site are paid five yuan a day, enough to buy a bowl of noodles, and to get such a job one needs connections. Among shoppers in Shanghai and Beijing I often saw half-naked peasant workers sleep on the pavement. In Canton both Chinese and foreign—especially Hong Kong—businessmen try to extract as much surplus value as they can.

In general peasant workers in these "world market factories" are not paid more than 300 yuan a month. This is nothing in Southern Canton which is the most expensive area in the country.

I met a few teenagers from the countryside in Sichuan province. These high school graduates went to Canton—the Chinese land of opportunity—to seek their fortune. They paid an employment agency to get jobs in a Hong Kong-owned toy factory working on an assembly line that turned out very much like a labor camp. Workers were not allowed out of the factory.

The first month was without pay. After that they were paid 195 yuan a month. They had terrible food and slept in beds with blood-sucking bugs. There was no medical care; sick workers were forced to go on.

Not surprisingly, rising consumerism, inflation and the increasing gap between rich and poor have social costs. Theft and robberies are common. When four teenagers escaped from their factory/prison and decided to go home, they were robbed in public by a man in a security guard uniform at Guangzhou Railway Station. In Shenzhen and Guangzhou, friends advised me not to go get on the privately operated buses where robberies often happen.

Southern Canton's apartment buildings have their balconies wired—even on the seventh and eighth floor—and homes are protected by double doors. They remind me of New York City.

WOMEN EXPLOITED

It is clear that economic reforms have greatly affected women's lives. A few months ago in Beijing, the Association of Chinese Women had to resist a loud call for women to leave the workplace and return home. In Canton and Sichuan it is popular for private restaurants to stage "fashion shows" during dinner time to attract customers. I was taken to a newly opened huge restaurant of Thai style in Foshan where four young girls were doing a "fashion show." They were very young—likely just out of high school—and not comfortable in their revealing clothes while walking in front of mostly male customers.

Prostitution is broadly practiced. Beijing's top prostitutes charge 1,500 yuan per hour. Everywhere "high-ranking" prostitutes rent rooms from grand hotels. Usually they have a deal with the hotel's staff who provide information about their male customers, for instance, their status, room and phone numbers.

Lower ranking prostitutes work on the streets and in cheap hotels. In addition, cinemas, barber shops, massage clinics, bars, swimming pools and beaches are places that male customers can get special services. A cinema on Shenzhen's main street sets up so-called "love seats." It costs 120 yuan for a "couple" to "watch a movie." In front of the cinema many young girls hang around, usually peasant workers, seeking men to "watch movies" for about 100 yuan.

Even the Chinese Women's Association admits that China has become another haven for whore-mongers. They come from Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, the Middle East and Western countries. They like Chinese prostitutes because they are cheaper and relatively "clean," being a short time in the "profession." It is striking to see advertisements on treating sexual diseases everywhere.

Women's commodification is also clear in the print media. Many magazines sold at book stands on the streets carry stories of rape, including gang rape. Such stories are usually disguised by conscientious titles, for instance: "A Brutal Crime: Records of Gang Rape of Chinese Women by Japanese Soldiers." The content, however, is pornographic, often with sketches of half-naked women, either prostitutes or victims of sex crimes. Pornographic materials are not only printed by private workshops, but also in state publishing houses.

TIANANMEN 1989, AND CHINA'S 1990s' 'GOLD RUSH'

If the 1980s was a decade of political insurgence, the 1990s seems to be the "gold rush" era. People are involved in all sorts of money-making practices. In Southern Canton in particular it's as if brainwashing had occurred. Nobody talks about politics. It's hard to believe that in 1989, after watching on Hong Kong TV what was happening on Tiananmen Square, the people in Guangzhou blocked the major bridge in the city in protest.

People in Beijing still remember 1989. From time to time 1989 emerged in my conversation with strangers. In the public space, however, June 1989 is erased. I went

to Tiananmen Square several times and it was, as usual, full of tourists. There was little sign reminding people of those days and nights. It is said that the steps to the People's Hero Monument have marks of bullets. But that area was surrounded by chains and no one was able to approach for a close look.

Mao has maintained a place in China. For some it is unthinkable not to visit Mao's Memorial Hall during a tour in Beijing. Mao's small portrait appears on taxis in Canton and Beijing. People told me Mao is regarded as a god whose greatness and brutality are believed to drive away evils that may destroy one's fortune. Thus he, to some extent, is used as a modern god of wealth.

One vendor in the Beijing Working People's Palace criticized the prevailing materialism and the government's selling-out of China to foreign business. He anticipated social disorder in the future considering the increasing poverty in the country.

I was amazed at how clearly ordinary Chinese see things and how critical they are of the government and the social problems. Yet many admitted that few were interested in politics. Absent in the 1990s is political will, political organization and collective political action.

Small demonstrations directly linked to economic matters occur from time to time—peasants protest against heavy taxes and workers, particularly retired workers, demand pay increases. They are usually put down with force and end with nothing.

The biggest change is that political demands have been replaced by economic ones. I suspect it is the government's strategy to lead people away from politics after 1989 by encouraging money-making and consumption. There is no doubt that a large number of people have brought into consumerism—last year in particular the media propagated lifestyles of the neo-rich.

Soaring inflation is the reason why so many are moonlighting and have lost their livelihood. To fill the stomach is the primary concern. Above all, 1989 seems to have totally wiped out desires for, or belief in, political change. I have come to realize that the cost of 1989 is

Youth

by Maya Jhansi

The 1990s began with a bang—George Bush's invasion of Iraq and the outpouring of tens of thousands of people opposed to Bush's bomb frenzy. Within days, however, this spontaneous anti-war movement collapsed—successfully sabotaged by Bush's yellow ribbon campaign. Now while a genocidal holocaust still rages in Bosnia virtually unchallenged by organized U.S. anti-war solidarity for Bosnia, U.S. imperialism parades itself as the harbinger of democracy in Haiti. What's going on?

The youth of the 1990s have inherited a strange world indeed. In the past month, the U.S. invaded and occupied Haiti in the name of "democracy" while the world watched. The loudest voice of opposition to the invasion didn't come from anti-war youth or the Left as in the 1960s' anti-Vietnam War movement, but from the racist right wing which argued that Haiti was not worth a single U.S. life. This right-wing cooptation of anti-interventionism calls on us to rethink the concept of "anti-war" and what it means for today.

It is perhaps not as "easy" to be anti-war today as it was during the Vietnam War where the U.S. was waging a direct war against a national liberation struggle. Today U.S. imperialism wears a benign mask, posing as the beacon of humanitarianism and democracy. After all, weren't the Americans fighting that most bloody dictator in Iraq? And whatever their motives in Haiti, aren't they getting rid of the murderous Cedras?

Indeed, now that Aristide is back in Haiti, Clinton and the U.S. military machine are taking credit for "bringing" democracy to Haiti. Of course, this is a logical fallacy—how can a military "bring" democracy anywhere??? The illogic of this view hasn't stopped many on the Left from supporting the U.S. invasion and occupation.

In a recent column in *The Nation*, for example, Christopher Hitchens argues that though the U.S. may have been in cahoots with Cedras in the past, the "algebra at work" in the situation in Haiti will force the U.S. "to behave as if it were acting on principle." Most shockingly, he ends by declaring, "For now I proudly wear the yellow ribbon that supports our boys in Hispaniola!" The creative self-activity of the Haitian masses which exposes the true nature of the role the military is playing in Haiti and the way the U.S. has put a stranglehold on Aristide shows the absurdity of Hitchen's position.

But he certainly helps to underscore what a strange and topsy-turvy world we live in when the Right opposes U.S. intervention and much of the Left supports military invasion in the yellow-ribboned colors of jingoism!

Nevertheless, others on the Left continue to ignore the contradictory reality of this changed world by stubbornly holding onto old slogans. "Hands off—!" You fill in the blank, anytime, any place—even if it means opposing lifting of the arms embargo on Bosnia and allowing the Bosnians to die without means of defending themselves. Like Bosnia, the situation in Haiti really exposes the emptiness of fixed left political formulas and categories. In the end, there is nothing substantial to distinguish the old anti-war slogan of "No to U.S. Imperialism in Haiti" from the racist, right-wing opposition to intervention in Haiti.

The nature of today's changed world shows the need for a vision of a new society as the only means of distin-

much, much higher than the death of thousands and the creation of a few elitist "student leaders" who have quickly embraced capitalism. It was a turning point in China's course of reforms—unfortunately not in a positive direction.

WHAT IDEALS WILL EMERGE?

What I found in China is the collapse of popular politics in Beijing and the country as a whole. Those who once played a major role in the pro-democracy movement—students and intellectuals—have either "plunged themselves into the sea of commerce" or are still hoping that an emerging middle class, neo-rich will affect China's political and economic life. I do not share this optimism. I have no doubt that the neo-rich—officials, owners of private business, technocrats, cultural elites and commercial entertainers—are connected to officials in one way or another and will have a greater influence on China's policy. Yet I am concerned about what kind of influence they will exert on the country. I fear that self-interests will become national policies.

I left China with complex feelings. I may be too pessimistic in thinking that China's chance to become a fair and relatively strong, self-sufficient society is very slim unless some fundamental changes occur in the political sphere and a different understanding of socialism and capitalism develop.

I don't know how long China can hold on as a nation. It remains a political project to get rid of this government, the entrenched feudal thoughts and practices and capitalist values. But where is the will? What ideals will emerge to unite people to fight for social justice?

The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State Capitalism

selected writings
by Raya Dunayevskaya

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Haiti exposes nadir of anti-war

guishing one's opposition to war and military intervention from that of the right wing. It could very well be that Haiti and the post-Gulf War reality show the historic nonviability of a concept of anti-imperialism which spends itself in what it is against without articulating what it is for. If that is true, youth today are living at a crucial crossroads in the movement for freedom. It has perhaps never been more clear than today that we need to begin with what we are for.

Free Forrest Green!

Los Angeles—It's a dangerous undertaking, and it's a crime, to be a young Black man who's a peacekeeper. That's what I learned when the police came and arrested my son, Forrest Lee Green, for murder.

My son is 26 years old and, although he knew all the gang members in the neighborhood, he was not in a gang. He learned to walk these streets and somehow have the gang members understand that he had chosen to settle down and raise a family. But the police never accepted that.

My son was 12 years old when the police first labeled him as a gang member. To me, that's like they were reserving a penitentiary cell for him right then. It was right after Police Chief Daryl Gates started the CRASH program, which gave police officers the leeway to stop you and write up their "feeling" of you, without any evidence or probable cause. And the police wrote my son up, as a gang member—for riding his bicycle on the sidewalk at 12 years old!

That got him into their data base. And they kept harassing him ever since, to keep him in the data base. One time they stopped him with \$51 in his pocket; it was money he had to buy some tennis shoes. And they wrote him up for trafficking in narcotics! Even the DA rejected it! And they kept that \$51 for three years before they gave it back to us, and I had to get a judge's order to force the police to give us that money back.

Three years ago, they tried to frame Forrest on a murder charge. He had never been in juvenile hall; he had never had even a misdemeanor arrest. He was volunteering at the high school as a peer counsellor, talking to the kids about staying out of trouble. And the police tried to frame him for murder. But they put together such a sloppy frame that it just disintegrated on them.

Then they came back two years later, almost to the day, and did it again. On a different murder. My son didn't even know the boy who got killed. Later I found out that in the week before that boy died, three people had put guns to his head and threatened his life. But the police came and got my son because he has a nickname, "Eight-Ball," that supposedly someone mentioned.

There are other folks that also have that nickname! But they don't care. They grab one of us as a suspect—and that's it. The case is closed. No matter what kind of other information people give them, they don't care. Any Black man will do.

We can't let this go on, that just because you're Black and poor you're a criminal. I can't afford a lawyer, and the Public Defender won't talk to me, and she isn't even talking with Forrest either. So what is going to happen to my son?

—Ardephila Hickey

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The Middle East has once again proven to be the key to the international situation, whether with the Israel-Jordan treaty, the Israel-Syria negotiations, the U.S.-Iraq confrontation over Kuwait, or the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

All of the hoopla surrounding Clinton's visit and the signing of the Israel-Jordan treaty on Oct. 26 cannot cover over the festering problems which still threaten to explode in the region. In fact, it is more their mutual fear of the rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism than any genuine desire for peace that has brought the various powers, great and small, toward negotiations over the past year.

This is surely the motivation behind the decision by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States to ease their economic boycott of Israel. As for Egypt, the fact that fundamen-

Election results in Brazil

In Brazil's Oct. 3 presidential election, Fernando Cardoso of the Brazilian Social Democratic Party soundly won against Luis Ignacio Lula da Silva (Lula) of the left Workers Party. Cardoso's victory was due primarily to the immediate results of the "Real Plan," a currency restructuring program he put in place while Finance Minister, and which went into effect last July. Popular support for Cardoso accelerated as inflation, chronic in Brazil for years, dropped from 45% in June to only 1.5% on the eve of elections.

Cardoso's candidacy also had the support of the International Monetary Fund and 97% of Brazil's chief business executives. His economic plan includes opening Brazil's major industries—oil, mining, telecommunications, energy—to foreign capital, privatizing state-owned companies, and maintaining the IMF-approved restructuring of Brazil's huge foreign debt.

Lula, a union leader and former auto worker, accused Cardoso's corporate backers of suppressing prices during the campaign to gain support. In the week following the election, food prices went up 4%, and the inflation rate is expected to rise for the first time since the Real Plan went into effect.

Nearly 25% of Brazilians live in abject poverty, and one-third struggle on the brink of starvation. Brazil ranks second in the world in the gulf between rich and poor, below Botswana. While Cardoso has promised a program of billions to improve housing, education, health and sanitation, it all depends on raising funds from privatization.

Almost 20% of Brazilians showed their disgust by casting blank or otherwise invalidated ballots, and the unrest evident before the elections has not disappeared. Auto workers struck in September against a labor-management agreement (Camara Setorial) which through speed-up has resulted in 20% increased productivity but stagnant employment and wages.

Also before the elections, over 10,000 gold miners, armed with weapons and alcohol, invaded the outnumbered Yanomami Indians on their mineral-rich reserve in what even the government's Indian agency has called "day-by-day genocide." Politicians, catering to the jobless miners for their vote, dismissed the Indians' rights. These and many more contradictions are sure to intensify under Cardoso's presidency.

Middle East in crisis, from Israel to Iraq

talists would be so brazen as to nearly stab to death 83-year-old Nobel Prize winning writer, Naguib Mahfouz, ensured the deployment of the military to protect Clinton during a brief stopover there.

The Israel-Jordan treaty breaks no new ground whatsoever toward a real foundation for peace in the region.

Italy's general strike



Unemployed workers protested outside Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi's office in Rome, joining millions of workers who took to the streets in 97 cities, Oct. 14, in a nationwide general strike.

What democracy in France?

Several shocking events have exposed the French government to sharp criticism from intellectuals and human rights activists and have posed deep questions about the nature of democracy in France. In October, the rightist government refused to grant a visa of more than 24 hours to exiled Bangladesh feminist writer Taslima Nasreen. Nasreen responded sharply, stating that "it is regrettable that France bows to fundamentalist forces for political and economic motives."

The decision produced a week of attacks on the government, some of which linked the decision to its racist immigration policies. A month before the government banned all demonstrations of any kind during a visit by Chinese leader Jiang Zemin.

But the biggest shock was to the Left with the revelation in a new biography of President Francois Mitterrand, now an isolated more or less symbolic figure inside a rightist government. The biography punctures the claims of the reformist Left to have resisted the Nazis.

The biography reveals that Mitterrand joined an extreme rightist group in 1934, and that in 1936 one of his first political actions was to participate in a racist demonstration against a French law professor who had agreed to represent Ethiopia when it appealed vainly for help against an invasion by Mussolini.

Later, Mitterrand became an official in the collaborationist Vichy regime, and even today claims that he was unaware of Vichy's persecution of Jews. He did not join the Resistance until 1943. Even afterwards, he helped to protect Vichy leaders.

First, with the exception of the period of the Gulf War, Israel and Jordan have been tacit allies ever since 1970, when King Hussein crushed the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

Second, the only new thing in the treaty actually undermines the chances for peace—Article 9 refers to the "special role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Muslim holy shrines in Jerusalem." This clause has given Palestinians the impression, probably correctly, that Israel intends, with the help of Jordan, to hold onto the whole of Jerusalem indefinitely, bypassing the Palestinians completely.

It is this clause, already approved in July, plus Israel's failure to implement the 1993 accords with the PLO, which have fueled the rise of the terroristic Hamas movement among Palestinians. These Islamic fundamentalists, who want to set up a theocratic state which would drive Jews into the sea and oppress women and all who do not share its sectarian interpretation of Islam, are growing also because of the corruption and authoritarianism of PLO chief Yasir Arafat's leadership. Their growth is aided as well by the absence of an independent left alternative to Arafat.

The three Hamas attacks in October, from the Oct. 10 gunfire in a Jewish area of downtown Jerusalem, to the subsequent kidnapping and execution of an Israeli soldier, to the horrific actions of the suicide bomber who killed over 20 Israelis on a bus in the center of Tel Aviv on Oct. 19 have shown that the fundamentalists have the means and the will to strike virtually anywhere.

Equally shocking were the cheers which greeted news of the Oct. 19 bombing among a sector of the Palestinian community. Yet it should also be remembered that similar cheers from some Jews greeted the murder last February by a Jewish fundamentalist of over 40 Arabs at the Hebron mosque. The refusal of the Israeli government to crack down on Jewish fanatics and settlers in February mirrors the refusal today of the PLO to crack down on Hamas.

Clinton's negotiations with Syria, which apparently achieved little of substance, will hardly, even if successful, solve the Palestinian-Israeli problems on the ground. These problems include not only the question of Jerusalem, delayed elections on the West Bank, the thousands of political prisoners Israel still holds, and Israel's racist and short-sighted attempt to replace Palestinian labor with new migrant workers from South Asia. Also looming in the background is the fate of millions of Palestinians living in exile in various Arab countries, especially Lebanon and Jordan, who have not even been promised citizenship in the new Palestinian entity.

In Iraq, the decision to move troops toward Kuwait in October and then withdraw was an apparent defeat for Saddam Hussein who once again miscalculated the will of the great powers to defend the oil kings and sheiks.

The economic crisis in Iraq is worse than ever after four years of draconian UN economic sanctions which have harmed the masses far more than the regime. Amid silence from world opinion, the Hussein government has committed genocide and created ecological disaster in its effort to wipe out resistance among the largely Shiite Marsh Arabs of southern Iraq.

What does "peace" in the Middle East mean, if Saddam Hussein's brutal rule continues, if the Palestinians languish in poverty, prison, and exile, and if fundamentalist groups are growing everywhere?

Kurds face betrayal

Factional killings have been rampant in the Kurdish-ruled areas of Iraqi Kurdistan. The political parties in power, Barzani's KDP and Talebani's PUK, faced with an economy in shambles, rampant hunger and massive destruction of the land have been self-destructing as well. With unprincipled tactical alliances with Turkey and Iran, they have outraged and alienated their own masses. Since 1992 several armed conflicts have broken out. The two parties have practically declared war on Kurdish freedom fighters in Turkey and Iran.

Many Kurds have come out marching and protesting to stop the killings and betrayals. Women's marches have put a stop to the fighting on several occasions.

Meanwhile, Turkey is conducting the largest military campaign in its history against Kurds. Half a million troops are stationed in eastern Turkey. At least 50,000 are in active combat. In October alone, 17 villages were destroyed in less than 72 hours after being labeled as "supply bases." Thousands of Kurds including writers, elected officials and legislators have been killed or are in jails today.

The Gulf War never ended for the Iraqi Kurds. After fleeing by the millions into the mountains, and after the world outcry in their support, the United States reluctantly provided a shield for them to return to their lands. With the U.S. military under the umbrella of UN/NATO, Kurdish political leaders formed a government that today is being used as a noose around the neck of Kurdish aspirations for national liberation.

It is common in the Left to point to this situation as "proof" that the main enemy is "nationalism." But that is yet another way to overlook the fact that Kurdish national consciousness (not nationalism) is still indispensable to the development of any revolutionary movement in the whole region. What we see today is the consequences of the failure to spell out the dialectics of revolution concretely.

It is crucial to solidarize with the Kurdish masses by working out the meaning of the philosophy of revolution that is needed, and ensuring that it is tightly tied to the struggle of the Kurds for freedom. —Cyrus Noveen

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973); and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as American Civilization on Trial concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her recreation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.